FILMS: EVAN RACHEL WOOD GOES ROMANIAN

THE ACTRESS TALKS "COUNTRYMAN" FILM AND OLD TV ROLES. PAGE 16

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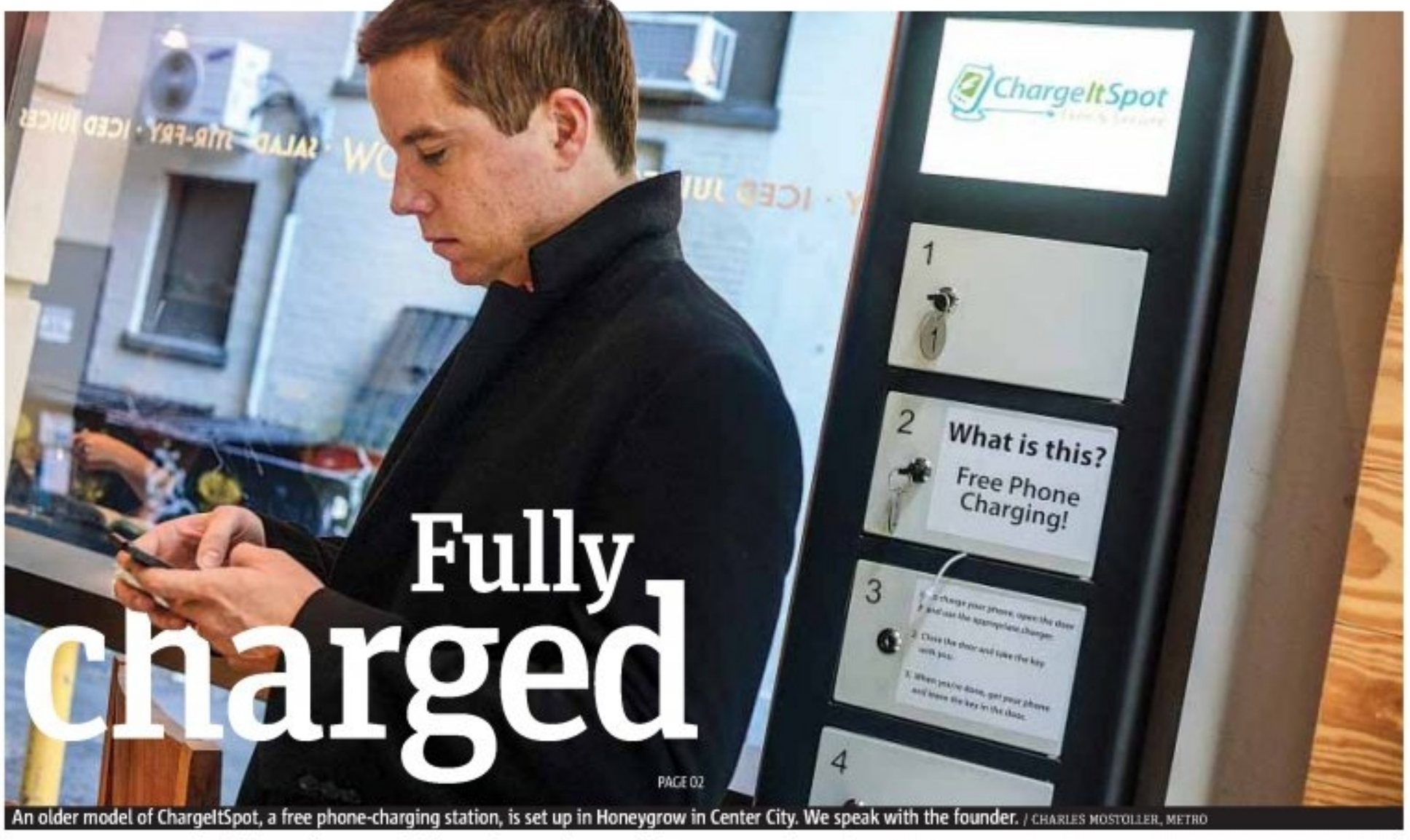
House shoots down transportation bill

Failed. Reps did not agree to pass a bill that would have used more than $2 billion to repair bridges, roads and transit systems. **Cutbacks.** General Manager Joe Casey said transit would be affected and SEPTA could be looking at a "slow death." PAGE 04



Fully charged

PAGE 02

An older model of ChargeItSpot, a free phone-charging station, is set up in Honeygrow in Center City. We speak with the founder. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

The Marvel superheroes you need to meet now

PAGE 15

Sleigh Bells add more decibels to the mix

PAGE 19

Turner thriving under Brown

PAGE 28

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1 NEWS

Local tweet

"you can't skip over Thanksgiving, people go right from Halloween to Christmas.. not cool"

Madison Stewart, @juststew_it, says stop and smell the #turkey.

Top 3

What's trending at Metro.us

1 'VIDEO: Cookie Monster stars in 'Catching Fire' parody'

2 'VIDEO: Harvard students are stumped on Canada's capital'

3 'VIDEO: Rapper Watsky attempts 30-foot stage jump, fails terribly'

Shop and charge: Philly guy makes it possible

ChargeItSpot. Villanova-born and Wharton-educated entrepreneur wants to help you charge your phone.

Doug Baldasare, founder of ChargeItSpot, stands between his second-generation machines in his office in Center City Philadelphia. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

Doug Baldasare sees his smartphone charging stations as the next air conditioner.

"When air conditioning first came out," he said, "it wasn't an understood thing that a retail store had to have it. But eventually, when all the stores had [it], you couldn't not have air."

Baldasare, 29, is the founder of ChargeItSpot, just one of many Center City start-ups the city says is happy to help grow, as long as they stay.

The charging kiosk is essentially a locker. Find an open slot, connect your phone, lock it up and take the key — free of charge.

Baldasare sells the device to retail outlets. The businesses pay for the customer's convenience, and to keep them inside. "So while you're waiting for your phone to charge," Baldasare said, "you spend more time in the store."

The lockers are in 68 stores in six states.

"The fact is, consumers are constantly running low on their phone batteries, and we need power to our batteries like we need water," Baldasare said. "We're so addicted to our phones, and when we run low it's anxiety-producing."

A new business environment has emerged in the last decade around smartphones and gadgets.

"We are going after, in one way, a new market," Baldasare said. "But at the same time, we're bringing it to a traditional market that's looking for new growth opportunities."

The city is on board.

Luke Butler, of the city's commerce department, said ChargeItSpot is one of many fast-growing tech start-ups in the city.

"We're trying to figure out what role can city government play to support that growth," Butler said.

As these young start-ups grow, the city wants them to stay. And to keep them, they'll help them navigate the tax and real estate environments, he added.

But will Baldasare continue his business in Philadelphia?

"Yeah," he said. "That's the plan."

TOMMY ROWAN
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So, what's his story?

The idea kindled in Miami

"I was in Miami," Baldasare said, "and I was low on battery."

He was with three other friends who were about to split up but they couldn't. They wouldn't be able to find each other. Their phones were dead.

"Damn," he said. "Why can't I just walk into Urban Outfitters and charge my phone?"

He originally thought the customer would be tethered to the kiosk, and then he settled on the locker. The first one was installed in August 2012.

Quoted

"The cost of doing business in Philadelphia is much lower than in [New York or San Jose], but at the same time we have an increasingly growing and strong network of companies and organizations that rely upon and that support start-ups." Butler

PGW. Thirty express interest, only a few asked for final bids

Thirty companies have offered to purchase the Philadelphia Gas Works, the city announced Tuesday, but it won't say which were asked to submit final bids.

"The number and strength of the indicative bids we received earlier this month were equally encouraging," Nutter said in a news release.

The utility is expected to sell for between $1.5 and $2 billion, which would bring a net profit of between $422 and $872 million. The money would likely fill the city's pension fund. Final bids are due in January, and the sale is expected in February. METRO

Sought

Mail carrier robbed

A North Philadelphia mail carrier was robbed Tuesday and police are looking for multiple suspects, officials said.

It happened around 3:30 p.m. Tuesday at 19th and Cumberland streets.

The suspects were armed and wearing masks. They fled in an SUV. METRO

Nabbed

Two charged with animal cruelty

Two men have been charged with animal cruelty after setting a cat on fire in Olney on Nov. 10, officials with the PSPCA said.

Tyrique Hall, 21, and Jose Sanchez, 18, were picked up by police on Tuesday. They could face up to 10 years in jail.

Campbell / PSPCA

The cat, named Campbell, will recover for another month at the SPCA shelter hospital. METRO

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House shoots down transportation bill

Bummer. A bill to fund state roads, bridges and transit systems failed.

Doomsday could be upon SEPTA.

The Pennsylvania House of Representatives did not pass a transportation bill Monday night that would have spread out $2.3 billion in funding to repair many of the state's bridges, roads and public transit systems.

In September, SEPTA officials laid out its "Doomsday scenario" that without the state funding, the transit authority would cut routes. Essentially, SEPTA claimed most of the Regional Rail lines would gradually fall into disrepair and eventually be eliminated along with reductions on several other services.

Quoted

"It's critical to the region, it's critical to the Commonwealth, so something really needs to get done."
Casey

"We do not expect any immediate cutbacks," SEPTA General Manager Joe Casey said Tuesday night. "What we're looking at is a slow death, if you will."

While the need to raise taxes was repeatedly cited as a major concern for the bill's collapse, it was the part that knocked out the need to fund union-level pay for the public projects that had the most impact.

The state Senate passed a similar bill in the spring, but it did not include wage changes.

On Monday, lawmakers said they would revisit the proposal — but as of press time, nothing had been passed.

"The needs are there," Casey said. "And it's not just public transit. It's the highways, too. ... And we're running our buses over the same crumbling bridges and crumbling roads."

TOMMY ROWAN
tommy.rowan@metro.us

Chart a course with
Jefferson at the Navy Yard

To help keep you and your family healthy, Jefferson at the Navy Yard has scheduled the following free health education seminar.

Sleep Apnea: The Silent Epidemic

December 10, 2013
5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Karl Doghramji, MD

Sleep apnea can cause many problems, including daytime sleepiness, poor sleep quality, a bad mood and high blood pressure. It can even lead to heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. Dr. Doghramji, Medical Director of the Jefferson Sleep Disorders Center, will discuss diagnosis and treatment options.

Jefferson at the Navy Yard
3 Crescent Drive, Suite 100
Philadelphia, PA 19112

Refreshments will be served.

Registration is required.

To register or make an appointment, call 1-800-JEFF-NOW or visit us on the web at **JeffersonHospital.org/navyyard**

Jefferson at the Navy Yard

Blaze

Thirteen displaced after fire

At least 13 people and several pets were displaced by a fire that broke out in a row home in Upland, Delaware County, on Tuesday.

Investigators believe the fire started in an electric space heater in a bedroom.

All of the people in the two homes, and three cats, escaped without injury. Animal control was called to rescue trapped cats in the basement. METRO

Small town

Police investigate Malvern homicide

Police are investigating a homicide in a small Chester County town, according to media reports.

Drew Ferguson was found dead Monday inside his Malvern, Pa., home. Chester County District Attorney Tom Hogan told ABC this was "not a random" killing. Anybody with information should call Chester County detectives at 610-344-6866. METRO

Don't tip it over

A man rests on the large dominos created by artists Daniel Martinez, Renee Petropoulis and Roger White in Center City. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

JANUVIA® (sitagliptin) tablets are widely available on most insurance plans.[a]

Today, I took steps to balance my TYPE 2 DIABETES.
Today, I took a walk and talked to my doctor.
See FREE offer below.[b]
Actor portrayal.

JANUVIA works to lower blood sugar in 2 ways. Talk to your doctor about JANUVIA today.

- **JANUVIA is a once-daily prescription pill that helps your body increase insulin production in your pancreas and decrease the sugar made in your liver.**
- **Along with diet and exercise, JANUVIA helps lower blood sugar levels in adults with type 2 diabetes.**
- **By itself, JANUVIA is not likely to cause weight gain or low blood sugar (hypoglycemia).**

JANUVIA (jah-NEW-vee-ah) should not be used in patients with type 1 diabetes or with diabetic ketoacidosis (increased ketones in the blood or urine). If you have had pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas), it is not known if you have a higher chance of getting it while taking JANUVIA.

Selected Risk Information About JANUVIA

Serious side effects can happen in people who take JANUVIA, including pancreatitis, which may be severe and lead to death. Before you start taking JANUVIA, tell your doctor if you've ever had pancreatitis. Stop taking JANUVIA and call your doctor right away if you have pain in your stomach area (abdomen) that is severe and will not go away. The pain may be felt going from your abdomen through to your back. The pain may happen with or without vomiting. These may be symptoms of pancreatitis.

Do not take JANUVIA if you are allergic to any of its ingredients, including sitagliptin. Symptoms of serious allergic reactions to JANUVIA, including rash, hives, and swelling of the face, lips, tongue, and throat that may cause difficulty breathing or swallowing, can occur. If you have any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction, stop taking JANUVIA and call your doctor right away.

Kidney problems, sometimes requiring dialysis, have been reported.

If you take JANUVIA with another medicine that can cause low blood sugar (hypoglycemia), such as a sulfonylurea or insulin, your risk of getting low blood sugar is higher. The dose of your sulfonylurea medicine or insulin may need to be lowered while you use JANUVIA. Signs and symptoms of low blood sugar may include headache, drowsiness, weakness, dizziness, confusion, irritability, hunger, fast heart beat, sweating, and feeling jittery.

Your doctor may do blood tests before and during treatment with JANUVIA to see how well your kidneys are working. Based on these results, your doctor may change your dose of JANUVIA. The most common side effects of JANUVIA are upper respiratory tract infection, stuffy or runny nose and sore throat, and headache.

Call 1-888-JANUVIA or visit www.Januvia.com.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

[a]Source: Fingertip Formulary,® August, 2013.
[b]Terms and conditions apply. Please see next page.

Please read the Medication Guide on the adjacent page for more detailed information.

Januvia (sitagliptin)
25 mg, 50 mg, 100 mg tablets

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Eligible patients may receive a free 30-day trial supply of JANUVIA® (sitagliptin) tablets.

Dose _____mg
Offer valid for up to 30 tablets.

JANUVIA is a prescription medication. Only your health care provider can decide if JANUVIA is right for you.

How this voucher works:
- This voucher can be used 1 time before the expiration date.
- To receive your free 30-day trial supply of JANUVIA, take this voucher with your valid signed prescription to any participating eligible retail pharmacy (certain restrictions apply).
- There is no requirement to purchase any product or service to receive your free 30-day trial supply of JANUVIA.
- Restrictions apply. **Please see Terms and Conditions on the back of this voucher.**
- **Expiration Date: 06/30/2014.**

Prescriber:
To initiate a free 30-day trial supply for an appropriate patient, you should:
- **Read the Prescribing Information before prescribing JANUVIA.** For additional copies of the Prescribing Information, call 800-672-6372, visit www.Januvia.com, or contact your Merck representative.
- Write a prescription for up to 30-day trial supply of JANUVIA. No substitutions are permitted.
- Refills are not required and there are no requirements to purchase any product or service to use this voucher. If you want your patient to continue taking JANUVIA beyond the free trial period, please write a separate prescription based on your recommended therapy.
- Fill in the dose on this voucher.
- Give the valid signed prescription and this voucher to the patient.
- Eligible patients can take this voucher and the prescription to any participating eligible retail pharmacy to receive their free 30-day trial supply.
- Restrictions apply. **Please see Terms and Conditions.**

Januvia (sitagliptin)

Pharmacist:
- Only 1 voucher may be used per patient. Voucher may not be transferred to another patient.
- There is no requirement for patient to purchase any product or service and refills are not required.
- Please ensure that the medication and dosage strength match the medication and dosage strength on the prescription.
- **Submit claim to McKesson Corporation using BIN No. 610524. For pharmacy processing questions, please call the McKesson Help Desk at 800-657-7613 (8 AM–8 PM ET, Monday–Friday).**
- For any other prescriptions, please use the patient's primary method of payment and a new Rx number.
- By processing this voucher, you agree that no claim for payment or reimbursement may be submitted for the free trial supply to any patient or any third-party payer, including federal or state health care programs (Medicaid, Medicare [including true out-of-pocket expense (TrOOP)], or any other state or federal medical or pharmaceutical benefit or pharmaceutical assistance program), private insurers, and health or pharmacy benefit plans.
- McKesson Corporation reserves the right to audit and review all records and documentation relating to the redemption of this voucher and the dispensing of product.
- By accepting this voucher, you agree to the terms hereof.

THIS VOUCHER IS NOT INSURANCE.

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www.metro.us

Medication Guide

JANUVIA® (jah-NEW-vee-ah) (sitagliptin) Tablets

Read this Medication Guide carefully before you start taking JANUVIA and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This information does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition or your treatment. If you have any questions about JANUVIA, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

What is the most important information I should know about JANUVIA?

Serious side effects can happen in people taking JANUVIA, including inflammation of the pancreas (pancreatitis) which may be severe and lead to death.

Certain medical problems make you more likely to get pancreatitis.

Before you start taking JANUVIA:

Tell your doctor if you have ever had

- pancreatitis
- stones in your gallbladder (gallstones)
- a history of alcoholism
- high blood triglyceride levels
- kidney problems

Stop taking JANUVIA and call your doctor right away if you have pain in your stomach area (abdomen) that is severe and will not go away. The pain may be felt going from your abdomen through to your back. The pain may happen with or without vomiting. These may be symptoms of pancreatitis.

What is JANUVIA?

- JANUVIA is a prescription medicine used along with diet and exercise to lower blood sugar in adults with type 2 diabetes.
- JANUVIA is not for people with type 1 diabetes.
- JANUVIA is not for people with diabetic ketoacidosis (increased ketones in your blood or urine).
- If you have had pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas) in the past, it is not known if you have a higher chance of getting pancreatitis while you take JANUVIA.
- It is not known if JANUVIA is safe and effective when used in children under 18 years of age.

Who should not take JANUVIA?

Do not take JANUVIA if:

- you are allergic to any of the ingredients in JANUVIA. See the end of this Medication Guide for a complete list of ingredients in JANUVIA.

Symptoms of a serious allergic reaction to JANUVIA may include:

- rash
- raised red patches on your skin (hives)
- swelling of the face, lips, tongue, and throat that may cause difficulty in breathing or swallowing

What should I tell my doctor before taking JANUVIA?

Before you take JANUVIA, tell your doctor if you:

- have or have had inflammation of your pancreas (pancreatitis).
- have kidney problems.
- have any other medical conditions.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if JANUVIA will harm your unborn baby. If you are pregnant, talk with your doctor about the best way to control your blood sugar while you are pregnant.

  Pregnancy Registry: If you take JANUVIA at any time during your pregnancy, talk with your doctor about how you can join the JANUVIA pregnancy registry. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. You can enroll in this registry by calling 1-800-986-8999.
- are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed. It is not known if JANUVIA will pass into your breast milk. Talk with your doctor about the best way to feed your baby if you are taking JANUVIA.

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of your medicines and show it to your doctor and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

How should I take JANUVIA?

- Take JANUVIA 1 time each day exactly as your doctor tells you.
- You can take JANUVIA with or without food.
- Your doctor may do blood tests from time to time to see how well your kidneys are working. Your doctor may change your dose of JANUVIA based on the results of your blood tests.
- Your doctor may tell you to take JANUVIA along with other diabetes medicines. Low blood sugar can happen more often when JANUVIA is taken with certain other diabetes medicines. See **"What are the possible side effects of JANUVIA?"**.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. If you do not remember until it is time for your next dose, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular schedule. Do not take two doses of JANUVIA at the same time.
- If you take too much JANUVIA, call your doctor or local Poison Control Center right away.
- When your body is under some types of stress, such as fever, trauma (such as a car accident), infection or surgery, the amount of diabetes medicine that you need may change. Tell your doctor right away if you have any of these conditions and follow your doctor's instructions.
- Check your blood sugar as your doctor tells you to.
- Stay on your prescribed diet and exercise program while taking JANUVIA.
- Talk to your doctor about how to prevent, recognize and manage low blood sugar (hypoglycemia), high blood sugar (hyperglycemia), and problems you have because of your diabetes.
- Your doctor will check your diabetes with regular blood tests, including your blood sugar levels and your hemoglobin A1C.

What are the possible side effects of JANUVIA?

Serious side effects have happened in people taking JANUVIA.

- See **"What is the most important information I should know about JANUVIA?"**.
- **Low blood sugar (hypoglycemia).** If you take JANUVIA with another medicine that can cause low blood sugar, such as a sulfonylurea or insulin, your risk of getting low blood sugar is higher. The dose of your sulfonylurea medicine or insulin may need to be lowered while you use JANUVIA. Signs and symptoms of low blood sugar may include:
  - headache
  - drowsiness
  - weakness
  - dizziness
  - confusion
  - irritability
  - hunger
  - fast heart beat
  - sweating
  - feeling jittery
- **Serious allergic reactions.** If you have any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction, stop taking JANUVIA and call your doctor right away. See **"Who should not take JANUVIA?"**. Your doctor may give you a medicine for your allergic reaction and prescribe a different medicine for your diabetes.
- **Kidney problems**, sometimes requiring dialysis

The most common side effects of JANUVIA include:

- upper respiratory infection
- stuffy or runny nose and sore throat
- headache

JANUVIA may have other side effects, including:

- stomach upset and diarrhea
- swelling of the hands or legs, when JANUVIA is used with rosiglitazone (Avandia®). Rosiglitazone is another type of diabetes medicine.

These are not all the possible side effects of JANUVIA. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you, is unusual or does not go away.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

How should I store JANUVIA?

Store JANUVIA at 68°F to 77°F (20°C to 25°C).

Keep JANUVIA and all medicines out of the reach of children.

General information about the use of JANUVIA

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes that are not listed in Medication Guides. Do not use JANUVIA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give JANUVIA to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them. This Medication Guide summarizes the most important information about JANUVIA. If you would like to know more information, talk with your doctor. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for additional information about JANUVIA that is written for health professionals. For more information, go to www.JANUVIA.com or call 1-800-622-4477.

What are the ingredients in JANUVIA?

Active ingredient: sitagliptin

Inactive ingredients: microcrystalline cellulose, anhydrous dibasic calcium phosphate, croscarmellose sodium, magnesium stearate, and sodium stearyl fumarate. The tablet film coating contains the following inactive ingredients: polyvinyl alcohol, polyethylene glycol, talc, titanium dioxide, red iron oxide, and yellow iron oxide.

What is type 2 diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes is a condition in which your body does not make enough insulin, and the insulin that your body produces does not work as well as it should. Your body can also make too much sugar. When this happens, sugar (glucose) builds up in the blood. This can lead to serious medical problems.

High blood sugar can be lowered by diet and exercise, and by certain medicines when necessary.

This Medication Guide has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Distributed by: Merck Sharp & Dohme Corp., a subsidiary of
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US Patent Nos.: 6,699,871 and 7,326,708

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Revised: 05/2013

USMG-T-04311305R011

Januvia (sitagliptin)
25mg, 50mg, 100mg tablets

DIAB-1050517-0019 08/13

Terms and Conditions

- This voucher is valid for 1 free 30-day trial supply of JANUVIA.
- Limit 1 voucher per patient for the duration of the program.
- Valid for 1-time use only. Free trial offer is valid only for up to 30 tablets of JANUVIA. No purchase is necessary. Refills are not required.
- This voucher is not transferable. No substitutions are permitted. Cannot be combined with any other free trial, coupon, discount, prescription savings card, or other offer.
- **This voucher is not insurance.**
- You must be 18 years or older to redeem this voucher. Patient, pharmacist, and prescriber agree not to seek reimbursement for all or any part of the benefit received by the recipient through this offer. The free trial supply of JANUVIA cannot be used toward any out-of-pocket costs under any plan (such as true out-of-pocket expense [TrOOP]).
- This voucher can be used only by eligible United States residents at any participating eligible retail pharmacy in the United States. Product must originate in the United States.
- This voucher is the property of Merck and must be turned in on request.
- **It is illegal to sell, purchase, trade, or counterfeit this voucher. Void if reproduced. Void where prohibited by law, taxed, or restricted.**
- Merck reserves the right to rescind, revoke, or amend this offer at any time without notice.
- Data related to your redemption of this voucher may be collected, analyzed, and shared with Merck, for market research and other purposes related to assessing voucher programs. Data shared with Merck will be aggregated and de-identified, meaning it will be combined with data related to other voucher redemptions and will not identify you.
- **Expiration Date: 06/30/2014.**

Januvia® (sitagliptin) tablets

6 philadelphia Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Zoo-born. Five babies welcomed at the zoo; help name a gibbon

There's been a recent baby boom at the Philadelphia Zoo as five newborns have been welcomed this fall.

Moja, a female black and white colobus monkey, was born to 10-year-old mother Johari on Sept. 3. The newborn's name means "number one" in Swahili. Moja was the first of four colobus monkeys born recently.

Moja joins Mbiili, a male, whose name means "number two." He was born to 8-year-old mother Dhoruba on Oct. 8. Nine-year-old mother Zabibu gave birth on Oct. 23 to Tatu, a female, whose name means "number three."

"Number four" is Nne, a male, who was born to 15-year-old mother Ophelia on Nov. 9.

Eleven-year-old Chua, the only male colobus monkey, is the father of all four newborns.

The zoo also welcomed a male white-handed gibbon who was born to 24-year-old Phoenice, who already has a 2-year-old male named Leo. Both offspring were fathered by 23-year-old Mercury.

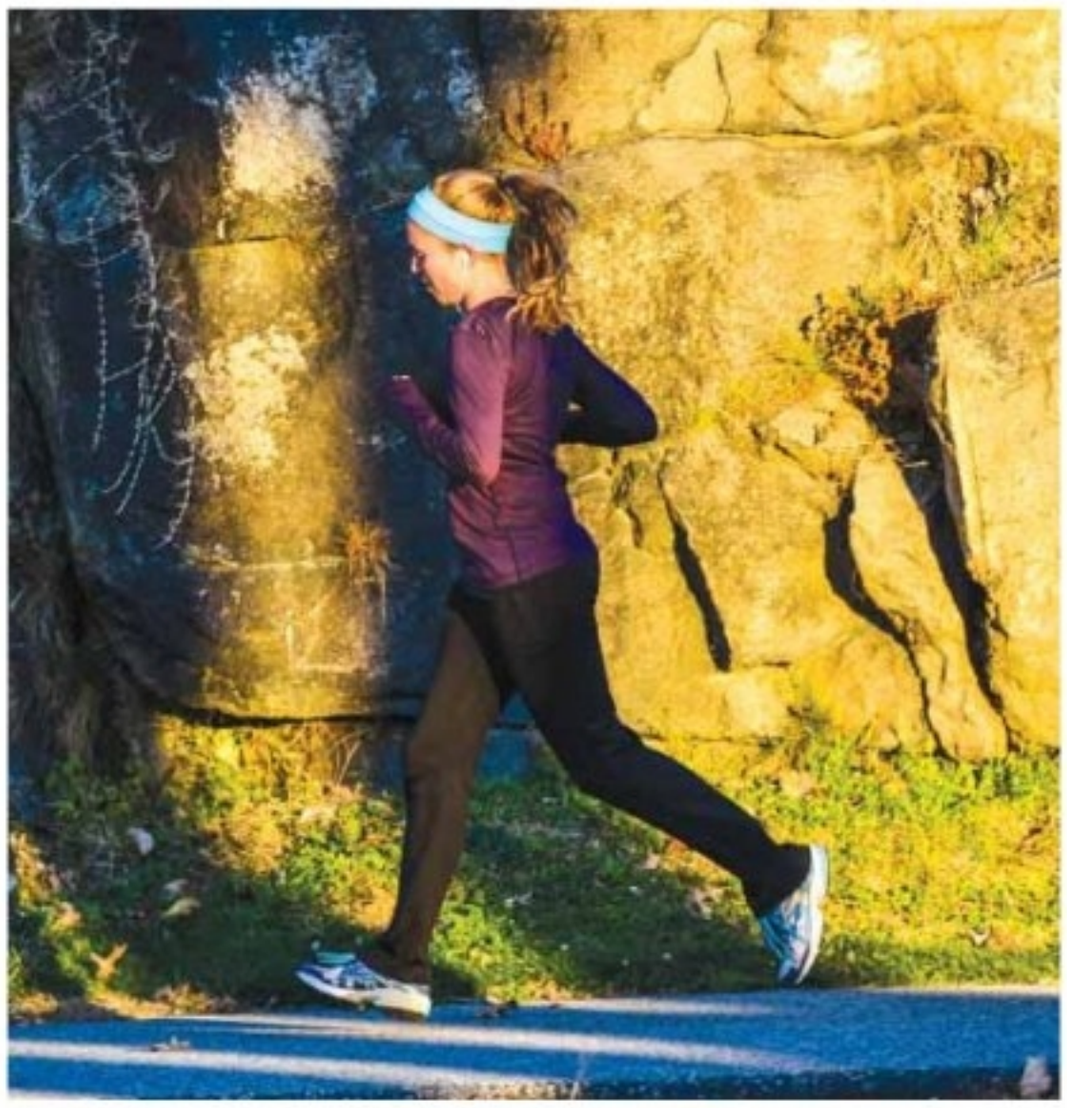
"It is always exciting for us to announce successful births at Philadelphia Zoo," says Kevin Murphy, general curator.

CHRISTINA PACIOLLA

Facts

Colobus babies are white at birth and turn to their adult colors within the first month.

- White-handed gibbons in the wild typically live in serial monogamous pairs with up to four offspring.
- Zoo officials started a Facebook campaign to help name the gibbon.



Jogging into the sunset along the river

After two unseasonably warm November days, temperatures dropped dramatically in Philadelphia on Tuesday. The sun was out though and that didn't stop joggers along the Schuylkill River from getting their workouts in. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

Toy drive

Tony's Metro Magic

Join Metro in giving to a local child in need this holiday season. Here's how: Look for the Tony's Metro Magic logo on our website, www.metro.us. One click on the logo will take you to a Wish List we have set up via a secure link on ToysRUs.com. Once there, you can see all the toys we've already requested for kids, with more being added daily. Simply select the toys you want and purchase them. That's it! Selecting only the toys on our Wish List ensures that all the gifts will be shipped to our offices. If you donate, email Metro at charity@metro.us, letting us know what you gave, and we'll print a "thank you" in the paper. METRO

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BBB

Report. Virginia state senator stabbed in home; son found dead

A Virginia state senator was stabbed and seriously wounded at his home early on Tuesday, and police said they were investigating whether the senator's son may have carried out the attack before committing suicide.

Creigh Deeds, a 55-year-old Democrat who ran unsuccessfully for governor in 2009, was flown to the University of Virginia Medical Center in Charlottesville with stab wounds to his head and upper body, a Virginia State Police spokeswoman said.

His 24-year-old son, Austin "Gus" Deeds, was alive at the home in Millboro when police arrived, police said, but died at the scene of a gunshot wound.

"We're still looking into and leaning toward it being an attempted murder-suicide. But at this time, it's not concrete," spokeswoman Corinne Geller told reporters.

REUTERS

In trouble again

Judge grants Zimmerman bond after arrest

George Zimmerman was granted bail on Tuesday after his arrest on assault charges for an incident in which he is alleged to have pulled a shotgun on his girlfriend.

Zimmerman's bail was set at $9,000 by a Seminole County Judge Fred Schott, who said he found probable cause for Monday's arrest.

The judge set Jan. 7 as the date for Zimmerman's next appearance in court on charges stemming from the domestic dispute, when he allegedly pointed a shotgun at his girlfriend. Zimmerman appeared in court after spending the night in jail. His charges include aggravated assault with a firearm, a felony, and two misdemeanors — domestic violence and criminal mischief. He could face three to 15 years in jail.

REUTERS

US health care website contains security bugs, expert warns Congress

The Obama administration said on Tuesday the website was safe to use. / GETTY IMAGES

Rollout. The site has been bedeviled by technical glitches since its launch on Oct. 1.

The website at the center of U.S. President Barack Obama's health care overhaul has security flaws that put user data at "critical risk" despite recent government assurances it is safe to use, a respected security expert said on Tuesday.

"There are actual, live vulnerabilities on the site now," David Kennedy, head of computer security consulting firm TrustedSec LLC, told Reuters before testifying at a congressional hearing on the topic "Is My Data on HealthCare.gov Secure?"

Kennedy, a former U.S. Marine Corps cyber-intelligence analyst, presented a 17-page report describing the problems to the House Science, Space and Technology Committee. It does not go into specifics in some areas, he said, because that could provide criminals with a blueprint for launching attacks.

"There is a lot of stuff that we are not publicly disclosing because of the criticality of the findings," Kennedy said. "We don't want to hurt people."

When asked to describe the severity of the threat that they posed to the public, he said it was a "critical risk."

The HealthCare.gov site collects data including the names, birth dates, social security numbers, email addresses and health care information about its users that criminals could use to engage in a wide variety of scams.

"The Obama administration has a responsibility to ensure that the personal and financial data collected by the government is secure," said Lamar Smith, the Texas Republican who is chairman of the House committee. REUTERS

Quoted

"Unfortunately, in their haste to launch the HealthCare.gov website, it appears the administration cut corners that leaves the site open to hackers and other online criminals."

Lamar Smith, Texas Republican who is chairman of the House committee

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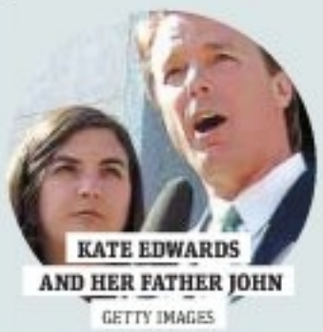
In the family

John Edwards and his daughter launch new firm

Former Sen. John Edwards is opening a new law firm with his eldest daughter, he said on Tuesday, shedding the low profile he has kept since standing trial last year on campaign finance fraud charges.

The firm, billed as a national plaintiffs' practice with offices in Raleigh, N.C., and Washington, D.C., marks a return to the career where he made his fortune by winning multimillion-dollar verdicts in personal injury and product liability cases before entering politics. REUTERS



KATE EDWARDS AND HER FATHER JOHN
GETTY IMAGES

Phone records

Norway denies US spying, said it shared with US

Norway's intelligence services said it — and not the U.S. National Security Agency, as reported in a Norwegian newspaper — kept records on more than 33 million phone conversations over the space of one month last winter, Oslo said on Tuesday.

The daily Dagbladet newspaper said the U.S. NSA spied on close NATO ally Norway, collecting data about Norwegian phone conversations last December and January.
REUTERS

THE FLAG OF NORWAY
GETTY IMAGES

Deadly Midwest storm damage might be $1B

Twisters. The storm system triggered multiple tornadoes on Sunday.

Residents of a small central Illinois city hit by a powerful tornado were allowed back to comb through the wreckage of their homes for personal belongings on Tuesday, two days after the deadly storm caused an estimated $1 billion in property damage across the Midwest.

Authorities doubled to 1,000 their estimate of homes damaged or destroyed in the storm that hit Washington, a town of 15,000 located 145 miles southwest of Chicago.

Hundreds of Washington residents were cleaning out belongings and loading things onto trucks Tuesday, to the sound of chain saws cutting through fallen trees.

Dick Bowers was looking through the remains of his son's destroyed home for a filing cabinet filled with personal papers.

"Early damage estimates suggest that the property damage caused by the storm could reach $1 billion, with the greatest toll in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky and Missouri, according to Risk Management Solutions, a Newark, Calif.-based company that specializes in assessing the toll of storms and other disasters. REUTERS

People survey the damage in the Washington Estates subdivision in the aftermath of a tornado in Washington, Ill. / GETTY IMAGES

Quoted

"My daughter-in-law lay on their 2-month-old baby and my son lay on them ... I'm amazed they made it out alive." Bowers

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Sensitivity

UAE, Kuwait jail two Twitter users for dissent, blasphemy

A United Arab Emirates court has jailed a man for two years for tweeting about a political trial and Kuwait handed a five-year prison term to a Kuwaiti Twitter user for insulting the Prophet Mohammad, activists and a lawyer said on Tuesday.

The cases and similar previous prosecutions highlight the sensitivity of Gulf Arab states to political dissent, criticism of senior officials, ruling family members and to comments they regard as blasphemous, especially on social media.

Activists said Walid al-Shehhi, who was arrested in May, was convicted on Monday of violating the country's Internet crime law by a court in the capital Abu Dhabi. He was also fined $136,100. REUTERS

US and Afghanistan agree on security pact ahead of meeting

Troops. The deal was reached just two days before they gather to debate the pact.

U.S. Army soldiers walk to their C-17 cargo plane for departure May 11, 2013, at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan. / GETTY IMAGES

The United States and Afghanistan have agreed a final version of a crucial security pact outlining where and how many U.S. troops can remain in Afghanistan after most foreign forces leave the country next year, an Afghan official said on Tuesday.

Thousands of Afghan tribal and political leaders are due to gather in Kabul this week to decide whether to allow U.S. troops to stay after the 2014 drawdown of foreign forces.

The deal will contain provisions to give U.S. troops immunity from Afghan law and allow them to enter Afghan homes in exceptional circumstances.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai has long objected to both but the United States has said the provisions are crucial in order for its forces to remain in the country beyond 2014.

Aimal Faizi, a Karzai spokesman, said the agreement was partly owed to a promise by U.S. President Barack Obama to write a letter to the Afghan people acknowledging mistakes made during the 12-year war.

"Both sides agreed that Obama send a letter ... assuring the president and the people of Afghanistan that the right to enter into Afghan homes by U.S. forces and the extraordinary circumstances will not be misused," Faizi told reporters.

Previously, Karzai had planned to present the tribal elders with two versions of the pact, which would have increased the chances of key U.S. demands being rejected and it pulling all its troops out after 2014. REUTERS

Quoted

"The whole idea of having a letter was to acknowledge the suffering of the Afghan people and the mistakes of the past. That was the only thing that satisfied the president." Hamid Karzai

UN. Disaster chief stresses long-term needs for Philippines

The head of U.N. disaster relief visited the heart of the Philippine disaster zone on Tuesday and stressed the need for long-term planning as well as emergency relief to ensure farmers and fishermen can resume their livelihoods.

Valerie Amos toured the devastated coastal town of Guiuan in Eastern Samar, where Super Typhoon Haiyan made landfall on Nov. 8.

"We've had people here for a couple of days and I hope that by tomorrow we will be reaching a number of those coastal communities where they still have their boats but we haven't been able to get to them with food so we urgently want to get to them with food," Amos told Reuters.

"But, in addition to that, we have to link it up to our colleagues who are going to help people to plant so that they don't go hungry next year, help to make sure that people have fishing nets so that they can continue with their fishing." REUTERS

Reconstruction cost

$5.8B

A government official estimated the reconstruction bill of $5.8 billion.

A man walks through the rubble of Guiuan Town. / GETTY IMAGES

Kenya. Investigators piece together plot in September mall attack

Four gunmen who attacked a Nairobi shopping mall in September came to Kenya about four months earlier and some had exercised at a gym in an area of the Kenyan capital popular with Somalis, Western officials with knowledge of the investigation said.

Kenyan police, with help from several Western nations, are piecing together events leading up to the assault on Westgate mall, which killed at least 67 people and which highlighted the reach of Somalia's al Qaeda-aligned Islamist group Al Shabaab.

Tracking down where the gunmen stayed and how they spent their time before the strike has led to a suburb of Nairobi known as "Little Mogadishu" because of its large Somali population and a small gym on the first floor of Eastleigh Mall, a shopping complex in the area.

"We know where they lived. We know the gym several of them used. We know when they acquired the vehicle," said one of the Western officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

He said all four gunmen, who had spent time together in Somalia before the attack, had crossed into Kenya overland in June. "They came in through a common entry point," the official said, without saying where that was. REUTERS

Working it out

A trainer at the New Andalus Gym, where the schedule posted at the door is written in both English and Somali, said criminal investigators had visited twice about two weeks ago. He said the officers said they had information the gunmen worked out there.

Fifty trapped in building collapse

At least one person was killed and up to 50 more were trapped under rubble on Tuesday after a soccer pitch-sized section of a shopping mall under construction collapsed near the South African city of Durban, emergency services and police said. If safety regulations are found to have been flouted, the accident could hurt the ruling African National Congress as it moves toward an election next year. Durban and the surrounding province of KwaZulu-Natal are the home of President Jacob Zuma. The region has enjoyed a construction boom in the last few years, based in part on government investment in infrastructure improvements. REUTERS / GETTY IMAGES

Kazan plane crash

Russia: Pilot had put plane into nosedive

The pilot of an airliner that crashed near the Russian city of Kazan killing 50 people had pushed the steering column to pitch it into a nosedive, crash investigators said on Tuesday, citing data recorder analysis.

The Interstate Aviation Committee offered no explanation why the pilot of the Boeing 737 jet might have performed the maneuver after aborting a first attempt to land.

Aksan Giniyatullin, the CEO of Tatarstan airlines which operated the jet, told a news conference: "The lead pilot had never made a second landing attempt under real flight conditions."

Video of the crash showed the aircraft, approaching Kazan on a flight from Moscow, plummeting headlong into the tarmac and exploding. REUTERS

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DOUGLAS COUPLAND

Douglas Coupland is a Canadian writer, artist and designer. His first novel was 1991's "Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture." His novella, "Temp," of which this is the 11th installment, will be running online and in the pages of your daily Metro each weekday through Nov. 29.

Day 13: Temp does ambulance duty

I asked Darren to put Dan into the BMW's backseat. "If we dump him by the door at Crown, they'll be forced to take pity on him."

Darren rifled through the glove compartment. "Look! A Blackberry Z10!" The Blackberry then promptly rang (ringtone: "Dust in the Wind" by Kansas). "Hello?"

A woman squawked on the other end. I grabbed the receiver. "Hello, who's this?"

"It's Chantelle, Dan's wife. Who's this?"

"I'm Shannon. I'm a temp at Dan's office. He had an accident and we're trying to take him to a hospital but he doesn't have his credit cards so nobody wants him."

"Come to our house and pick me up."

"Aren't you in Florida?"

"I found a card with a pile of unused frequent flyer miles so I returned early."

Chantelle was on the curb. Her lips were swollen like Donald Duck's beak, and it was hard to not stare.

"I know I look strange but I never expected to get old and then one day it happened and, as you can see, I'm not handling it well. I know I look ridiculous."

On cue both Darren and I chimed, "No, you look great!"

Darren added, "I'm sure your lips will look terrific once they deflate, Chantelle."

Chantelle was unruffled by the sight of Dan in the back, and with me at the wheel and Darren in the passenger seat looking and smelling very street-y. Chantelle removed a fifth of vodka from her purse. "Any takers?"

Darren eagerly accepted, and we soon arrived at Crown Permanente. "You two lug him in," she said. "I'll handle the staff."

"You've got your credit cards, then?"

"Cards shmards. A well-dressed, well-nourished white woman with obvious cosmetic surgery is welcome in any hospital on the planet."

Dang if she wasn't right. The supermodel nurse beamed at her, while another fetched her a cappuccino and asked which satellite music station she preferred. We dropped Danimal's carcass inside the door and two hot guys who looked like Qantas flight attendants whisked him away. It couldn't have been more pleasant.

"You two wait in the car. I'll be out in a sec."

Chantelle soon emerged and got into the backseat. "Shannon, take me home. Darren, you stay the night at my place. We can party and maybe you can take a shower later. Dan's clothes will fit you, too. Shannon, you keep the car for a few days."

"Seriously?"

"I may be aging gracelessly, but I'm no idiot like Kevin's wife. Just promise me you won't set fire to it."

"It's a promise."

I feel like a bad person, but I was so excited to have a Beemer for a few days that I forgot to ask what was wrong with Dan.

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1

Was Brittany Murphy poisoned?

When Brittany Murphy passed away suddenly in 2009, the official cause of death was pneumonia and anemia. Most people assumed that, in the case of a super-skinny, erratic starlet, it was a euphemism for death by drug abuse. When her husband, Simon Monjack, died just five months later of the same cause — pneumonia and anemia — that fit neatly in with the theory.

However, Murphy's father, Angelo Bertolotti, wasn't satisfied. He recently secured the rights to send samples of Murphy's hair and tissue to a lab for independent testing. The Examiner has the lab report, and it tells a different story:

"Ten of the heavy metals evaluated were detected at levels higher than the [World Health Organization] high levels. ... The only explanation would be an exposure to these metals administered by a third-party perpetrator with likely criminal intent."

Heavy metals such as those found at high levels in Murphy's body are often present in rat poison and insecticides. They can cause all of the symptoms that Murphy and Monjack suffered before their deaths.

It is hard to remember all the way back to 2007 when Murphy and Monjack were married, but the two were frequently the target of tabloid speculation. Monjack had a shady criminal past, and once he married Murphy, she started to act increasingly strange and was soon scarily gaunt. Murphy started losing jobs — she was allegedly fired from "The Caller" due to being difficult (with Monjack picking fights). Shortly before her death, Monjack was rushed to a hospital after his plane landed at LAX. He was incoherent when EMTs boarded the plane. An asthma attack was blamed.

To make it even stranger, Sharon Murphy, Brittany's mother, continued to live with Monjack after her daughter's death, even sharing a bed with him.

Hollywood is a weird, scary place, man.

— With additional reporting by Melinda Taub

Brittany Murphy passed away suddenly in 2009 at the age of 32. / ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Who needs a jacket?

Kim Kardashian stepped out in New York City on Monday wearing this sheer get-up, knowing all eyes would be on her this week. On Tuesday, "Bound 2," Kanye West's new music video featuring a naked Kardashian, debuted on "The Ellen DeGeneres Show." In the video, the new mom can be seen straddling West topless while he drives a motorcycle through the desert. It's really ... something.

THE WORD

Dorothy Robinson takes on the world of gossip.

DOROTHY ROBINSON
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3

Lovato: 'I didn't twerk, I just went to rehab'

How can Demi Lovato put Miley Cyrus' recent behavior nicely?

"A lot of artists take that route of shock value, and that's totally fine, but I think that she has an incredible voice that's overshadowed by some of the things that she's doing," Lovato tells Katie Couric.

Still, she's sympathetic. "I think that the world needs to get over the fact that she was Hannah Montana when she was 16 or whatever," the former child star says. "Same thing with me, but I guess my transition was a little different because I went straight to rehab. I didn't twerk, I just went to rehab."

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Get to know your superheroes

Last week, Netflix announced that it will develop four new series based on iconic yet lesser-known characters from Marvel's repertoire of superheroes. Daredevil, Jessica Jones, Iron Fist and Luke Cage series will begin streaming on the site in 2015. The four also will be featured in a Netflix-exclusive miniseries called "The Defenders." Here's what you need to know about these four superheroes:

Jessica Jones

Why her?

A freak accident with radioactive chemicals killed her family while she was in high school, but also left her with limited flight, invulnerability powers and super strength.

Best part of the comic: She's gone by several names including Jewel, Knightress and Power Woman, but she's best when she's working as an investigative journalist or detective. Oh yeah, she's also Luke Cage's leading lady. Melissa Rosenberg, who wrote the "Twilight" films, is writing this one.

Daredevil

Why him?

The New York City lawyer lost his sight when a radioactive substance fell on him. Now, he goes around fighting crime utilizing his supernatural radar abilities, proving justice is truly blind.

Best part of the comic: When Frank Miller took his turn at penning the crusades of the blind hero, he contributed most of the iconic parts of the series. We learned that Daredevil was trained by a ninja clan, but it didn't bode well for him that he fell in love with a ninja assassin who was trained by a rival ninja clan. "Cabin in the Woods" co-writer Drew Goddard is now behind the series. Also, let's pretend that the dreaded 2003 Ben Affleck version of this superhero's story never happened.

Luke Cage

Why him?

Due to illegal prison experiments that were done to Luke Cage when he was wrongly convicted, he's got superhuman strength, unbeatable stamina and skin so thick that it's nearly impossible to hurt him.

This black superhero was rumored to get his own film, but it seems like Marvel will be testing out his popularity through the Netflix model.

Best part of the comic: Cage is an entrepreneur and is known for starting the "Heroes for Hire" business, where you can pay a fee to have a superhero solve your problems. He knows how to be a team player and has worked with Iron Fist, Daredevil and Jessica Jones (more on them later). He was also a member of the New Avengers and led the Heroic Age Thunderbolts.

MICHELLE CASTILLO
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Iron Fist

Why him?

Through his martial arts studies, he was able to obtain dragon Shou-Lao's superhuman energy. He's mastered his chi, so he can heal himself or others and has limited telepathic abilities.

Best part of the comic: Part of his motivation comes from the fact that his parents gave up their lives to save his as they searched for the city of K'un L'un, which is inhabited by aliens from another dimension.

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Evan Rachel Wood plays a Romanian woman fought over by two men in "Charlie Countryman." / WIREIMAGE

MORE THAN JUST A PRETTY FACE

Interview. Evan Rachel Wood talks "Charlie Countryman" and missing television.

Evan Rachel Wood is more than an ingenue. She's a serious actor, with a list of impressive performances — an experimenting teen on "Once and Again," an estranged daughter in "The Wrestler," evil Veda in "Mildred Pierce" — under her belt at only 26. In "Charlie Countryman," she's Gabi, a young Romanian being fought over by an American (Shia LaBeouf) and a Eurotrash gangster (Mads Mikkelsen). But there's more to her than her looks.

"It was important that she was not just a pretty face," Wood explains. "She's a very strong, tough, hard girl with many walls. I think the only reason she lets Shia's character in is because he catches her at a very vulnerable moment. I think when you fall in love with people it's when you're at your most vulnerable. All your guards are down."

Wood says working for a visual director like Fredrik Bond requires patience. "It can be very scary for an actor," she says. "But then you see the finished product and you finally get it."

Like many other acclaimed actors, Wood has periodically found her way to the small screen. "A lot of people are flocking to TV now because a lot of things are actually getting made. It's so hard to get a movie made now. And there's such great things happening on TV because there's actually money to make them. And they're ballsy," she says. "I do miss TV sometimes. I do miss getting to know a character so well that you can just walk on set and immediately just start channeling them."

She even got her start doing cheesy TV movies as a child.

"When I was 12 they were the greatest things in the world," she says. "I did one with Meredith Baxter. I got to be kidnapped."

MATT PRIGGE
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On Shia

Controversial co-star

The film also gave her the chance to work with LaBeouf, another actor making the transition to adult roles. Wood, unlike him, has always done adult movies, usually playing a precocious teen. "I think he might have a harder time because started on the Disney Channel," she says. "People want to give him a hard time for that — even though he's so freaking good."

Wood has nothing but superlative words for her sometimes controversial co-star. "There's nothing diva-ish about him," she says. "He's very humble. He demands a lot because he cares so much."

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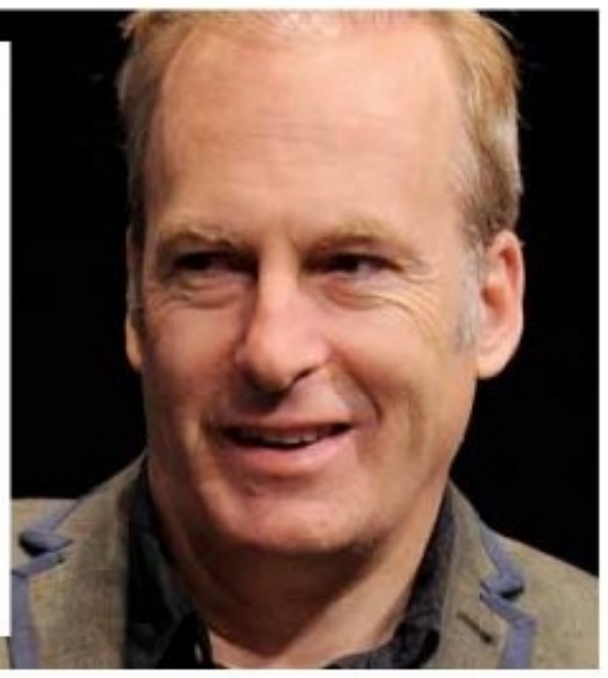
BOB ODENKIRK

"Nebraska" allows the actor to once again do a more serious form of comedy.

DRAMEDY IS HIS FORTE



GETTY IMAGES

Along with David Cross, Bob Odenkirk is responsible for the sketch comedy landmark "Mr. Show." But he's done plenty of drama — just the funny kind. His role as sleazy (but weirdly capable) lawyer Saul Goodman was one of the highlights of "Breaking Bad." "Nebraska" reunites him with "SNL" favorite Will Forte, who he directed in "The Brothers Solomon." But it's a serious comedy — a funny-moving study from Alexander Payne of a family whose sons (Forte and Odenkirk) have to deal with an aging, stubborn, alcoholic father (Bruce Dern) who thinks he's won a million dollars (he hasn't).

How did you get involved in a dramedy from a major filmmaker that reunites you with Will Forte?

I have auditioned for three of Alexander's films. I read for "Sideways," and I read for "About Schmidt," and I read for this. I love his work, I'm a huge fan. I felt very confident in playing Ross because I feel like I know him for a number of reasons — not the least because my father had an alcohol problem. My response to the whole experience was not unlike Ross's, which is anger and lack of forgiveness.

Is drama the same thing as comedy, generally speaking?

I probably have a harder time playing large on some of those sketch comedy stages that I perform on than I do playing smaller and internalizing. And by the way, Vince Gilligan gave me the role of Saul Goodman because of "Mr. Show," not for anything else. I think there's probably a couple things on "Mr. Show" where you can see the kind of commitment and modulation that a dramatic performance needs to have.

Did you ask him which sketches inspired him casting you?

I didn't ask him. I never want to look too close in the gift horse's mouth. I'm just like "Whatever you say, Vince, thank you." Then I walk away. I don't want to ask why these lunatics give me these opportunities.

How was working with Alexander Payne?

I keep saying how confident Alexander is. And that's something that's refreshing and that only makes you feel more secure and able to ... try things. A lot of filmmakers and a lot of us making art, we're crossing our fingers behind our back. I think Alexander Payne is not crossing his fingers. He does the work in every side of his filmmaking.

MATT PRIGGE
matt.prigge@metro.us

Keeping it real?

You're from the Midwest. How accurate is this film in portraying it?

That dinner scene ... I had so many of those dinners. They're not farmers, my family, but my god, that was just like every Thanksgiving I went to until I was 27, 28.

The men don't talk and watch football.

Everyone's watching football, the women talking, lunatic comments, funny characters, resentments that kind of creep out, friendliness, warmth, forgiveness — it's all on display. Sometimes you look at those people and you go, "What a clown car I'm in." And then sometimes you look at them and think, "These are the best people ever, and I love them all." You can see it from many sides. And I think this movie is the same way: You can see it as a funny comedy ... but also as a devastating, honest portrait of a family.

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‘Just a steel town girl’

Theater.
‘Flashdance: The Musical’ writer talks moonwalking and returning to Philly.

Jillian Mueller is aspiring dancer Alex Owens in the stage version of “Flashdance.” / JEREMY DANIEL

The 1983 film “Flashdance” was the first exposure to hip-hop culture for much of mainstream America. The film featured several B-boy dance sequences and breakdancers.

“It had those elements; it was pop-locking, that’s what it was called back then,” says Tom Hedley, who co-wrote the screenplay for the movie “Flashdance” and collaborated with Robert Cary on the script for “Flashdance: The Musical.”

“We were the first to film the moonwalk,” Hedley says. “Michael Jackson, who was very affected by ‘Flashdance,’ picked that up. There were lots of firsts.”

The movie used a quick-cut style of filmmaking similar to the then-nascent music video form.

“The critics attacked for it being too much like a music video, but there were some people who got the picture,” Hedley says. “[Director Adrian Lyne] made a very bold decision: ‘This music video vocabulary is very interesting so I want to try to use [that] vocabulary to tell the story.’ If he hadn’t done that, it wouldn’t have been successful.”

“Flashdance,” the story of Pittsburgh steel mill welder Alex Owens who dreams of becoming a dancer, was a cultural phenomenon featuring breakout hits like “Flashdance ... What a Feeling” and “Gloria,” as well as starting the legwarmers fashion trend. Now comes the play, which has the original songs and 16 new ones.

“For years, people were after me to do ... a sequel to the movie and I never thought that was a good idea,” says Hedley. “What would you do? It would be very cheesy. Team Alexandra with Baryshnikov?”

“Flashdance: The Musical” debuted in the U.K. in 2008 and seemed destined — like Alex Owens — for Broadway. There were several reports of a New York opening last August, which didn’t come to pass. “The producers had a big flop, actually, called ‘Leap of Faith,’ and they were nervous about losing money,” Hedley says. “We had already made the deal to do a national tour.”

As for Hedley, he’s coming to Philly with the musical and already knows his way around town. He worked here during the production of the 1982 movie “Fighting Back,” which starred Tom Skerritt and Patti Lupone, putting in 18-hour days on a script rewrite. “I got to know Philly rather well,” he says. “I all but lived in the Happy Rooster.”

CHRIS JORDAN
letters@metro.us

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“For years, people were after me to do ... a sequel to the movie and I never thought that was a good idea. What would you do? It would be very cheesy.”

Hedley, on “Flashdance”

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Sleigh Bells have some loud words for 'Bitter Rivals'

Music. 'Comeback Kid' band comes back once again.

Some critics and know-it-alls assumed Sleigh Bells — arguably Brooklyn's loudest noise-pop platonic pairing — would fizzle out within a few years. And perhaps, considering the utterly distinctive yet kind-of-formulaic nature of blast-off tracks like "Infinity Guitars" and "Tell 'Em," plus the psychic pressure of being one of the biggest "next big things" in 2009, naysayers had a point.

But they hadn't reckoned that Alexis Krauss and Derek E. Miller might be smarter than the bands who implode after a few blogosphere-catapulted hits. Or at least more show-biz savvy.

"From the very beginning, we were very cautious about who we worked with and who we took advice from," explains Krauss, when asked about all the expectations

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when, before a Sleigh Bells album existed, they were getting national exposure and signing with M.I.A.'s label. "I don't want to make it sound like we were paranoid, but we said 'no' to a lot of things."

The duo's prior experiences with the industry hype machine made it easier to dodge its pitfalls. During the first half of the '00s, Miller played in hardcore act Poison the Well, while an adolescent Krauss fronted obscure tween-pop act RubyBlue. Not coincidentally, floor-punchin' crunch mixed with bubblegum blithe-ness aptly describes the music they wound up writing.

"Bitter Rivals," their latest, probably won't turn any haters into fans, but it's not a retread of earlier albums either.

"We're interested in being a band that makes you feel lots of different ways," says Krauss, "that has you dancing your ass off at one moment, feeling a bit more pensive at another, and moshing the next."

BARRY THOMPSON
letters@metro.us

Miller and Krauss aim to dodge the music hype machine. / PROVIDED

Dial it up

This one goes to 11

Coinciding with their sonic progress, Sleigh Bells added a live drummer to their touring lineup, which ought to beef up the already staggeringly ear-splitting volume.

Even though Krauss and Miller made their mark with all-encompassing, absolute loudness, it's not their endgame. "I think we've maxed out the volume threshold at this point," says Krauss. "It's about more than just being loud."

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Retro meets modern in Annex at Touraine

Design. Liz Solms gave these eco-friendly apartments a stylish look.

When it comes to design, there are some styles that are best left in the past. And there are several modern aesthetics we strongly believe can't become outdated soon enough. Sometimes, though, when you get the right person seamlessly blending past with present, the results are inspired and sharp — and found at 1516 and 1518 Spruce Street. The Annex at Touraine has been transformed into a progressive, eco-friendly residence with sleek design behind all that good-for-the-earth technology.

The Annex is, as its name suggests, adjacent to the Touraine, a former hotel long since turned into luxury apartments. While the Touraine, listed on the Register of Historic Places, has all the grandiose details of an elegant hotel's posh lobby, the Annex is an old school walk-up. "But you can still use the front desk at the Touraine, since it's the Annex at Touraine. It's like living in the Touraine, but in a sweet apartment," explains Annex owner Liz Solms.

Solms takes her design very seriously. "My husband calls me an incredibly uncompromising person — in a positive way," she quickly adds. Solms has an unwavering commitment to Environmental Protection Agency guidelines for sustainability, which means the Annex includes water-saving fixtures, bamboo flooring and low-energy refrigerators (that also happen to be mint green with rounded corners, for a retro appeal). The kitchen and bathroom floors and backsplashes are made out of subway tiles.

"My approach is all about environmental sustainability," says Solms. "Then comes classic and interesting design that is the opposite of the granite countertops, the Lowes packaged rooms that are ubiquitous not just in Philly, but all over real estate. This is in direct opposition to that."

"We're keeping things simple and classic — it's not a flash in the pan," Solms says.

The two buildings hold 21 units, all studios and one-bedrooms. 1518 Spruce already has occupants; 1516 recently opened to renters.

JULIA WEST
letters@metro.us

Pinterest exploded all over these rooms — in a good way. / KYLE BORN

Check out that mint green throwback fridge. / KYLE BORN

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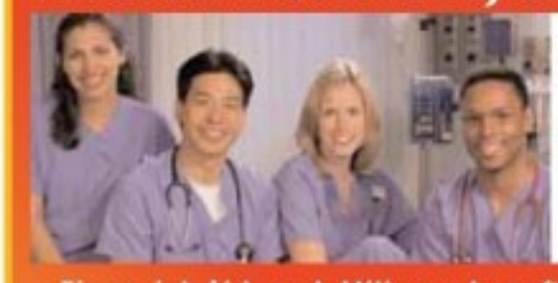

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Post-Sandy building boom heats up in Jersey

One year later. Construction firms are keeping busy as homeowners elevate properties and rebuild.

Some houses now need to be raised to protect them from future floods. / GETTY IMAGES

In the year since Hurricane Sandy slammed into the East Coast, construction companies have seen their business spike as homeowners tap them to rebuild, particularly on the hard-hit Jersey Shore.

Fueling this business are existing Federal Emergency Management Agency requirements and the soon-to-be-finalized flood zone maps. In particular, homeowners living in communities where houses sustained more than 50 percent damage from Sandy are required to elevate their homes — literally raising them on pilings — or demolish or relocate them. Even some homeowners whose properties weren't severely damaged are taking steps to protect them against future storms. In Long Beach Island, which is dotted with homes midway through reconstruction, David Construction LBI House Raising has seen a 50 percent increase in business since Sandy hit. "If we could handle all the work, we would have 30 times the amount of business," said Nancy Leonetti, co-owner of the firm.

To get homes into FEMA compliance, Leonetti said, her firm is raising them a minimum of 3 to 4 feet above their existing height. She estimated that a two-story Cape Cod-style house, ranging from 1,400 to 1,800 square feet, can cost $50,000 to $55,000 to elevate. That amount usually needs to be paid up front by the homeowner, who then gets reimbursed by the insurance company.

But one thing many homeowners with flood insurance don't realize is that they have Increased Cost of Compliance coverage, which also can pay up to $30,000 toward the cost of home elevation, said Nathan Colmer, a realtor with the Van Dyk Group. He also noted that many homes are at elevations that are safely above sea level. ALEX ULAM

By the numbers

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Number of New Jersey homeowners who applied for funding through the state's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program between June and September 2013.

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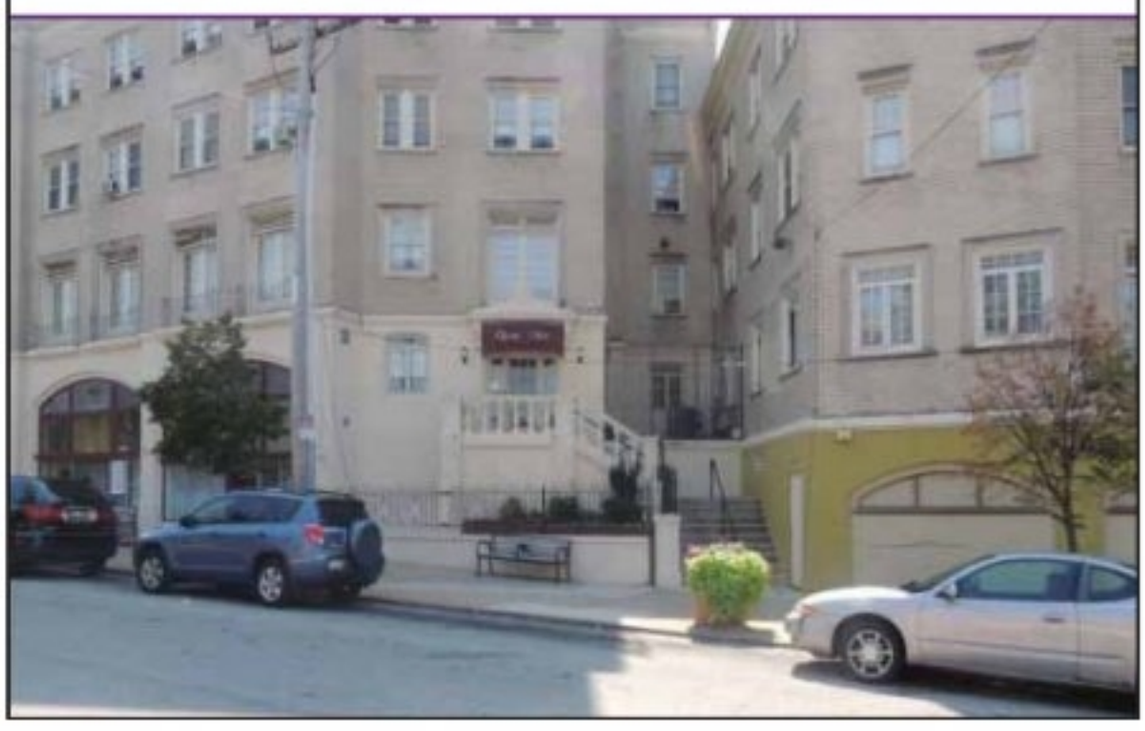

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TINA CHADHA

Looking sharp in houndstooth

Houndstooth adds a touch of sophistication. /GUERRE

Houndstooth is the weave that resembles a geometric block of '80s-esque space invaders. It's the jagged hipster cousin of gingham and this season, the pattern is the ubiquitous check of choice for men and women alike. Here, we find the looks that guys should get their teeth into this autumn.

RICHARD PECKETT
richard.peckett@metro.lu

1

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2

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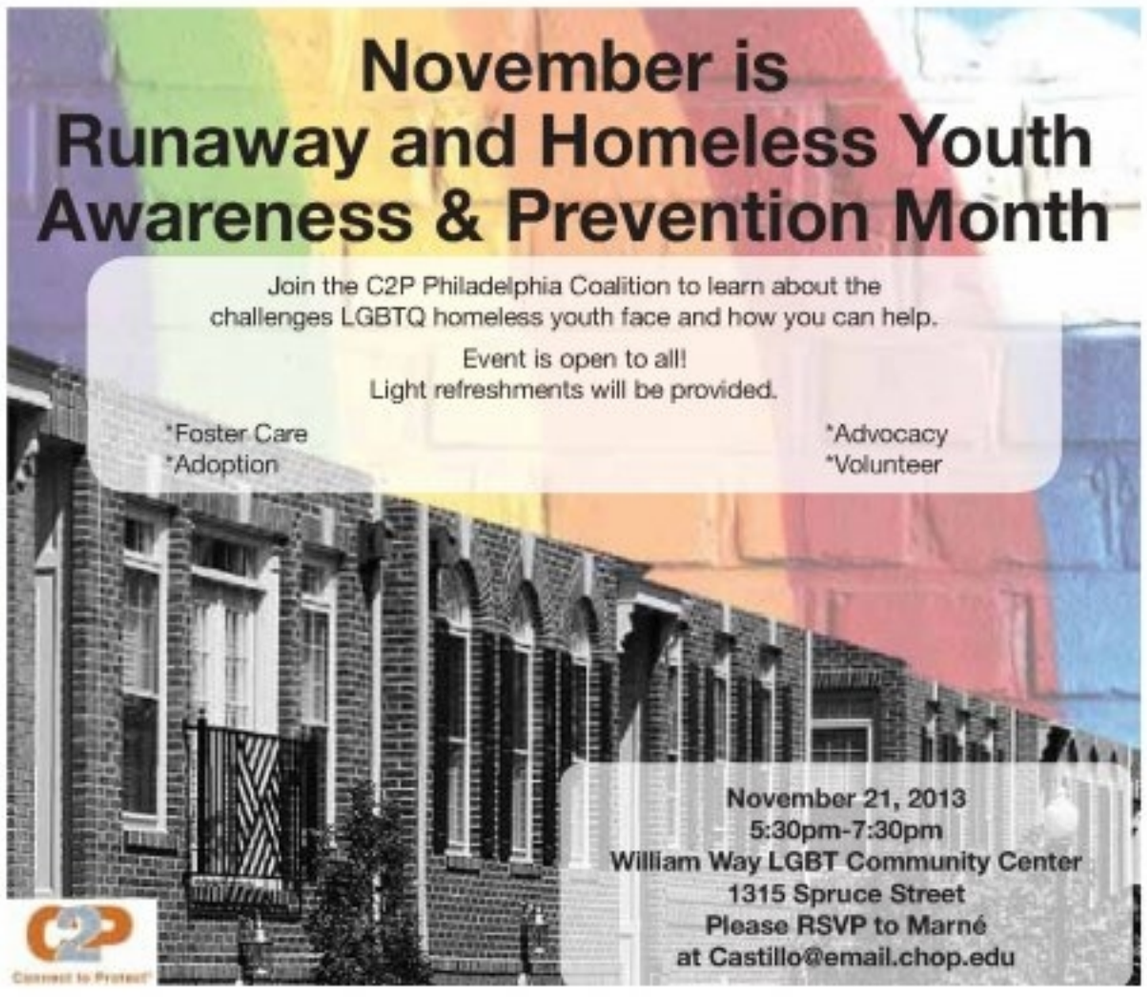

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There are selfish do-gooders who surrender their lives for the betterment of others. Then there are the incredibly lazy and selfish. That's most of us. We'd like to give money to cancer research, to Parkinson's research, to the starving at home and abroad. But we're too busy. We want charities to take our money, but on the condition that we literally only have to lift a finger.

There are many apps that turn us into giving monsters, but two stand above most, in large part because they're self-serving in addition to making us selfless.

An app called Instead, from Oven Bits, LLC, placates our need to be both charitable and thrifty. Rather than eat out, it asks you to eat in and donate the money saved (about $5 a day) to a charity for, say, HIV medicine. Pack a lunch three times a week, and the cash not spent goes to provide others with clean water.

Charity Miles

Price: Free
Charity Miles is even more hands-on. It calculates how much exercise you're getting, whether you're walking, running or cycling. For every mile you rack up, a set amount of cash is fired off to a charity of your choice: the Special Olympics, Stand Up to Cancer, The World Food Programme, etc. The energy spent will be entirely for your own purposes, even as it goes to those in need.

Karaoke Anywhere

Price: Free or $1.99
Karaoke Anywhere is not a force for good. It is a force for evil.

Until now, the act of singing — badly or scarily well — along to popular songs has been restricted to bars where the staff has resigned themselves to hearing people do "Achy Breaky Heart" ad nauseam.

When karaoke expanded to the home, with games like "Rock Band" and others, that was fine because it was contained.

But Karaoke Anywhere puts it on your phone, so it won't be long before Millennials are shouting their way through Cee Lo's "F— You." However, we did find some fun obscurities on this app like Plastic Bertrand's "Ca Plane Pour Moi." Maybe it's not all evil.

App Appeal

MATT PRIGGE
MATT.PRIGGE@METRO.US

Plague the world with bad singing with Karaoke Anywhere. / PROVIDED

Smartphone necessities. Lissie

On tour to promote her latest album, "Back to Forever," Lissie is on the road for much of the year. While traveling between cities every day, the singer relies on the following items on her smartphone:

Sudoku (Optime arts version): I like the challenge. It helps to pass time and I'd like to think it's good for my brain.

Instagram: I get to travel to lots of cool places and spend lots of time away from family and friends while on the road, so it's a good way to share what I'm up to and see what my friends and family are up to as well.

Twitter: It's a great tool for letting my followers know about shows. ... I can thank those who come to the gigs and the encouraging feedback keeps me going!

MyFitnessPal: On the road I don't eat very well and drink too much and get a bit of a gut! ... We are sitting for long periods of time. ... And this app helps me be mindful of what I'm eating and lets me set exercise goals.

Lissie loves her apps.
ANDREW WHITTON

United Airlines app: I'm a big nerd about my mileage. I stay loyal to United and had flown 100,000 miles by September of this year. Since that gives me status, I'm always fiddling with my app to make sure I'm eligible for upgrades, to get a good seat, etc., so that those overseas flights are as comfy as possible. It gives me updates about my flight status as well. METRO

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[ON SIMON/FEATURE PHOTO SERVICE FOR OCEAN SPRAY

MARIA MENOUNOS

Relax! You can indulge on turkey day. Here's how to do so wisely.

HEALTHY THANKSGIVING TIPS SHE SWEARS BY

Holiday season is here and for many people, that means an overload of festive food with a side order of guilt. But maybe we should stop beating ourselves up over a few days, and instead focus on our general food habits.

That's what 35-year-old actress, journalist and beauty icon Maria Menounos did when she was 40 pounds heavier than she is today. We love that she's lost the weight and kept it off, but we also are big fans of her no-guilt attitude for enjoying the holidays. Earlier this month, Ocean Spray set up a giant cranberry bog in NYC's Rockefeller Center, and we chatted up Menounos there to learn how we can adopt her no-shame ways this holiday season.

How do you resist unhealthy foods during the holidays?
I don't resist temptation, and I think that that's the key. Because I don't resist, I don't crave as much. [Recently] I was in the airport and I wanted M&M's so I had M&M's. I didn't eat the whole bag, because once I ate a few I was like, "Huh, I don't need them anymore." But if I were denying myself, then I would want it. I remember from my days when I was heavier people making me feel bad about my weight. Almost to defy them, I would get a gallon of ice cream and hide in the garage and eat the whole thing. So I understand how my mind works, and so when I don't deprive myself, I don't crave it. And when I do [crave something], I have it.

So you can actually go all out during the holiday?
Absolutely. And then I always say, after the meal take everyone for a walk around the neighborhood. Get a little exercise in.

How do you balance food, fitness and fun?
I never deny myself anything. I just keep it to certain portions. I'm not going to overindulge. If I go to a restaurant and I have a bunch of appetizers, I'm not going to get a meal. People don't really listen to their stomachs. I have to pick and choose — you can only eat so much. And so with fitness there are times where I can't work out for months. But I make sure I'm always active throughout my day. I'm taking the stairs. I'm running from point A to point B as fast as I can. I'm speed-walking in my office. I make sure to try to get 10,000 steps a day and I don't feel guilty, because sometimes you just can't [work out]. ... If I'm at a restaurant and I want to indulge, I'm not gonna beat myself up about it. I think that mentality is what saves me.

You were once 40 pounds heavier — and you said you weren't sorry about it and rocked it. Why did you change your lifestyle?
My dad was type 1 diabetic so I was putting myself at risk for diabetes, and at some point I had to look myself in the mirror and say, "You know what? It's one thing to be a little heavier and it's another to have eating contests with boys." I was taking it to another extreme and I was jeopardizing my health and so I had to focus on it. ... I was getting annoyed with having to work harder to find clothes that looked good. So maybe there was a little of that as well, but it really first and foremost was health.

Was getting healthy something you did together with your dad?
No. He's super fit and super healthy. He was my inspiration. I did it by myself. It was difficult because I didn't use a trainer. I just wrote everything down I was eating for a week. I looked at it and I said, "Oh, carbs are my problem. I'm going to cut back slowly." Then in five months I lost 20 pounds. And then from there I was very motivated, so I started working out and doing more.

Are you still tempted to eat like you used to?
For sure. And those are times when you just do it. The other night I wanted potato skins and so my boyfriend went and got potato skins and a soup and a salad. I never even got to the soup and the salad — I ate all of the potato skins myself. Whatever.

Q&A

So how do you keep from gaining weight if you're indulging over the holidays?
That's a big concern for everybody. I always tell people that are concerned about that to cut back three to four weeks before the holiday just 10 percent of the bad things each week. Just make tiny changes leading up to the holiday so that when you have the holiday you enjoy yourself like I want you to. It's a balance. You have been good for four weeks, so you can have a little here.

MAJA LUNDAGER
letters@metro.us

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This week in health news

A cup of tea may help weight loss

Pour a mug for your health.
TONGRO IMAGES

Location of study: U.S.
Study subjects: Data
Results: A cup of tea might be a valuable health and weight loss aid, according to new research published in the December 2013 American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. Researchers found that regular tea drinkers have lower BMIs, smaller waist-to-hip ratios and less body fat compared to non-tea drinkers. In addition, green, black or oolong tea's polyphenols and bioactive flavonoids may help prevent heart disease, certain types of cancer and type 2 diabetes. Tea was also found to improve bone health and activate areas of the brain that improve attention, problem solving and mood.
Significance: This new study of peer-reviewed papers adds further evidence to previously published study results showing that tea might work to improve health, both physically and psychologically.
LINDA CLARKE

— For three teas we like, turn to page 26.

NO PAIN, NO GAIN?

Sometimes it's just better to stay home. / GETTY IMAGES, DIGITAL VISION

Is it OK to exercise when I'm sick?

The human body is a miracle of integrated structure and function in so many ways. One of the more practical means of connecting function and feasibility is the idea that if something hurts, don't do it. For example, if you sprain your ankle playing a sport, the swelling and pain that accompany the injury are your body's way of telling you to rest and allow yourself to heal.

Managing the activities of daily life during an illness is not all that different. Because your body is generally working harder to fight off the infection, any additional stress on your system from exercise may, rather than boost your immune system, impair healing or prolong recovery time from the illness.

Here are some practical examples of how this works:

Strep Throat

This bacterial infection of the soft tissues at the back of the throat generally causes pain, fever, swollen glands and a general feeling of malaise. You may not have much of an appetite and may only be able to drink liquids due to the pain. Any sort of rigorous exercise — including running, weight lifting, spinning or team sports — may increase your overall fatigue, raise the temperature of an already feverish body and cause dehydration, since your ability to take in fluids is compromised.

Sinusitis

This infection of your paranasal sinuses is often accompanied by headache, cough from post-nasal drip and difficulty breathing through your nose from congestion. The elevation in heart rate and blood pressure that normally occurs with any type of cardio exercise may make the throbbing in your head from a sinus infection worse, and because you can't efficiently breathe through your nose, may make it more challenging to keep from getting winded.

Bronchitis

Whether from a bacterial infection or, more commonly, a virus, the inflammation of your airways that results in a hacking dry cough may only be made worse by the work of breathing during exercise. You may end up with wheezing and chest congestion due to cold outdoor air being raked over your already inflamed bronchial tubes, and a cough that is worse than ever.

On the whole, if your illness impairs your daily activities (work, sleep, eating) you probably shouldn't exercise. Don't be afraid to take a few sick days off from your workout. The benefit of resting to your general health is likely more useful than any short- or long-term gains to be had from exercising while ill.

The Doctor Will See You Now

DR. MARK MELROSE

URGENTCAREMANHATTAN.COM

Mark Melrose, DO, is a board-certified emergency physician at Urgent Care Manhattan. E-mail him your questions at askdrmark@metro.us.

Achoo!

Colds

Do you really want to be "that person" at the gym who is coughing, sneezing and wiping mucus all over the equipment, potentially infecting everyone else?

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Explaining the Affordable Care Act

The reasons for the insurance drama

In response to the uproar about millions of individuals receiving coverage cancelation letters, last Thursday the Obama administration announced that health insurance companies could extend those policies for one more year. The reason for the letters being sent to approximately 10 million Americans is rooted in the Affordable Care Act's requirement that health insurance policies include coverage for:

1. **Inpatient, outpatient and emergency care**
2. **Prescription drugs**
3. **Prevention and wellness services**
4. **Rehabilitative services and devices that help people with injuries or disabilities**
5. **Laboratory services, including blood tests and radiology services**

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, the vast majority of health insurance policies already cover these services. However, the ACA also requires the following Essential Benefits:

6. **Maternity and newborn care for a mother and baby before and after the baby is born**
7. **Pediatric services, including oral and vision care for children**
8. **Mental health and substance use disorder services**

HHS data shows that substance abuse services have only been covered by about 66 percent of plans and maternity and newborn care by 38 percent of policies. Plus, according to a study by HealthPocket, comprehensive pediatric services have only been covered in 24 percent of policies.

In order to be compliant with the ACA, insurance companies had a choice: Either amend the existing policies to include these additional services or cancel the policies and suggest that people buy one that includes all the required benefits. Either way, the added cost of maternity, mental health and pediatric care adds approximately 8-11 percent to monthly premium costs.

U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius has had to defend the Affordable Care Act since its debut. / GETTY IMAGES

What if you don't have children and have no need for pediatric care? What if you are 50, done having children and don't want maternity care? The ACA doesn't allow individuals to pick and choose from the list of Essential Benefits.

See more at www.metro.us

So, what should you do? I say ignore the finger-pointing. Instead, spend your time getting familiar with all the services covered by your new ACA-compliant health plan — especially the preventive care and wellness services that you can get without copays and deductibles.

Every week, Archelle Georgiou, MD, strategic adviser at HealthGrades, will explain one facet of the Affordable Care Act.

Breast scars?
Unhappy about their appearance?
A CLINICAL RESEARCH STUDY IS CURRENTLY EVALUATING AN INVESTIGATIONAL MEDICATION FOR REDUCING BREAST SCARS, AND YOU MAY QUALIFY TO PARTICIPATE.
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Study participants must have scars that are moderate severity or worse, and are raised above the normal skin.

Health notes

Infertility treatment trial

Main Line Fertility wants to help. / ARCHIVES

Philly women struggling with IVF costs can enroll in a free trial at Main Line Fertility in Bryn Mawr to test a new investigational treatment. The trial is open-ended; call Main Line Fertility at 484-380-4900 or visit www.thriveivf.com or www.clinicaltrials.gov to learn more.

Three teas we like

1. **Tetley Green and Black**
Get the benefits of green tea, without the bitter taste (it's masked by the black tea). **$4.39, grocery stores**

2. **Lipton Natural Energy Tea**
This new black tea has an extra dose of caffeine and L-theanine, an amino acid found in tea, to give you an extra kick. **$4.29, grocery stores**

3. **Numi Organic Chocolate Pu-erh Tea**
If you're craving hot cocoa but want to skip the calories, brew Numi's Chocolate Pu-erh, a Chinese tea with organic cocoa nibs. **$8.99, Shop.numitea.com**

Horoscope

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23-Nov. 21. Discuss sensitive issues. A relationship will benefit if you take a unique approach to domestic duties.

♐ Sagittarius | Nov. 22-Dec. 21. Altering where or how you live may lead to an emotional situation, but once you do, it will prove to be a good choice.

♑ Capricorn | Dec. 22-Jan 20. Strategy coupled with insight and a little luck will lead to victory. Put personal relationships first. Pay attention to what your friends respond to most favorably.

♒ Aquarius | Jan. 21-Feb 18. Don't ignore the facts. Listen and assure anyone who has concerns that you are willing to compromise.

♓ Pisces | Feb. 19-March 20. You will have the upper hand. Wheel and deal until you get what you want. An emotional relationship will be best dealt with passionately.

♈ Aries | March 21-April 20. Everything will be dependent on how you get along with others. Reach for equality, and you will find common ground that will bring you to your goals.

♉ Taurus | April 21-May 21. Shop around. Head for a destination that offers information, and spend time with someone.

♊ Gemini | May 22-June 20. Work toward getting whatever is expected of you out of the way. You will discover a talent you didn't know you had if you offer to help someone in need.

♋ Cancer | June 21-July 22. Expand your interests and explore what life has to offer. Subscribe to something that will help you broaden your perspective. Follow your heart.

♌ Leo | July 23-Aug. 22. Make the changes you desire, but do so discreetly. The less people know, the less interference you will face.

♍ Virgo | Aug. 23-Sept. 22. Getting in touch with people you have worked with in the past will bring about new opportunities. Mix business with pleasure.

♎ Libra | Sept. 23-Oct. 22. Share your concerns, but don't try to lay down the law. Compromise and keeping the peace will be your ticket to getting what you want. BERNICE BEDE OSOL

Sudoku: Easy and hard

		3		9				6
							4	5
2	4			7				1
3			5		9	8	7	4
7	6	8	1		4			2
6				4			5	7
5	7							
8				5		3		

		7			5	8		2
			1		4	6		
4				2		3		
	5	3	4					8
	2						9	
7					6	4	2	
		6		5				4
		8	6		9			
1		5	2			9		

How to play
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Letters

Baldwin deserves an award, not an ambush

Re: 'Baldwin uses hate speech, threatens to quit acting' (Metro, Nov. 18) I am a neighbor, and I am sick and tired of the photographers in our neighborhood who make Mr. Alec Baldwin's life miserable. He is a kind, generous person who does not deserve the negative media attention published. Mr. Baldwin is polite and his philanthropic work is somehow never mentioned. In my opinion he deserves a special honorarium for all his good works.
ELLEN EXTRACT, VIA EMAIL

An answer far afield

Re: Crossword (Metro, Nov. 14) Just a small correction for your puzzle. In the clue for 41 DOWN, "Isle off Sicily," the answer was "Elba" — but the island of Elba is quite far away from Sicily. It is much farther north, off the coast of Tuscany. It is well known for being where Napoleon was exiled. At best, it could be the island off Sardinia.
PIERA RULLI, VIA EMAIL

A beast of a perception problem

The rationale behind employment or insurance based on obesity seems to be that employers (and society) perceive it as a lifestyle choice. Given that it has significant genetic factors, however, it ultimately comes across as a similar move to penalizing those with a family history of cancer. If we really want to penalize for choices that cost money, we should target the consumption of animal products, with overwhelming evidence that this choice leads to increased disease.
CHARLES BOSSE, VIA EMAIL

letters@metro.us

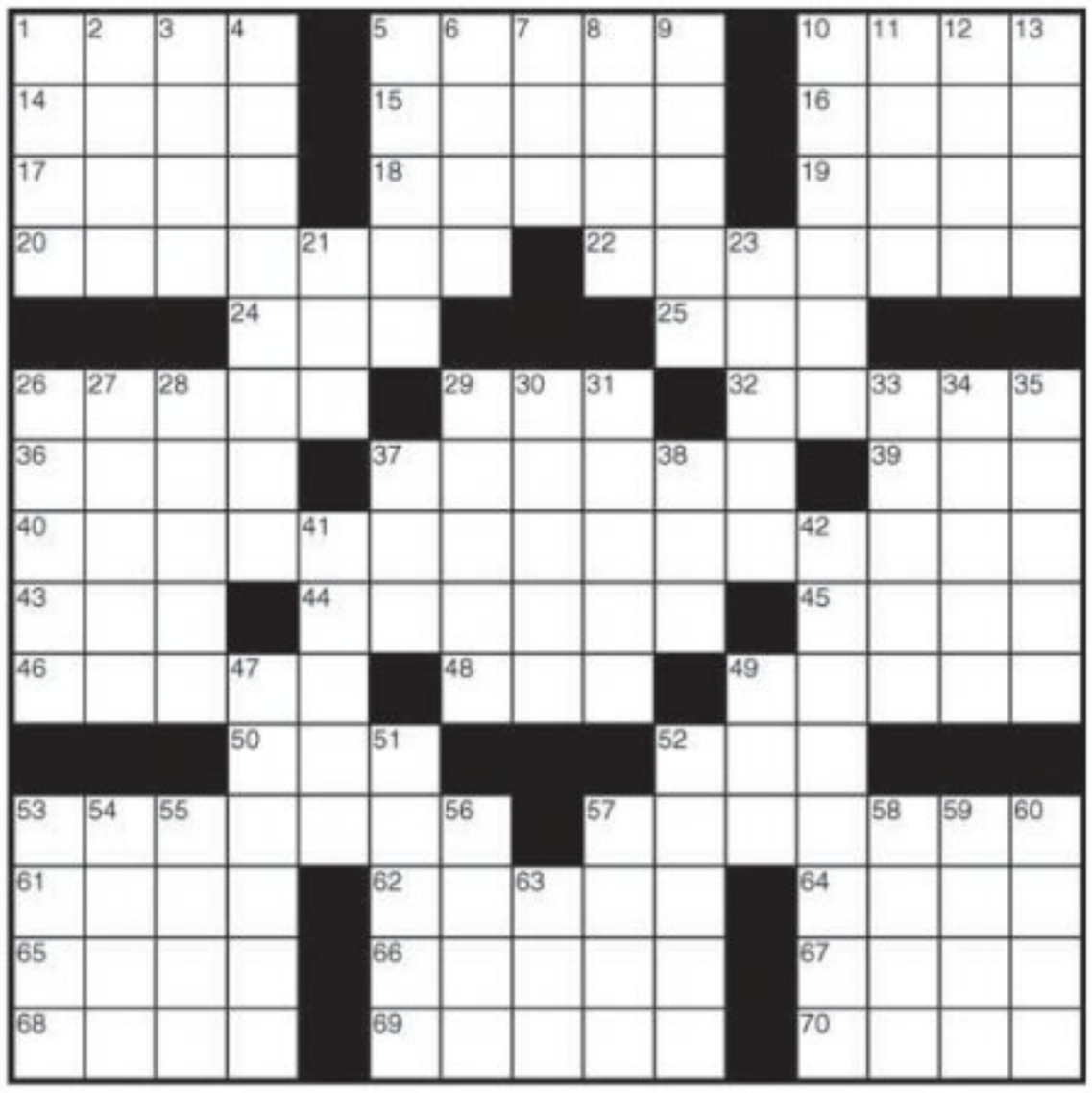
Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words. Metro reserves the right to edit all letters. Please include your name and contact info.

Crossword

Across
1 Wild guess
5 Glowing embers
10 Mountain route
14 — Major
15 Disturb
16 Caller's code
17 Snug retreat
18 Pie pro
19 Mini-container
20 Well-bred
22 Fix the roof
24 Attorney's deg.
25 Sci-fi Doctor
26 Ladybug food
29 "Nature" channel
32 Stop, to Popeye
36 Every now and —
37 A B-vitamin
39 Caesar's 52
40 Place for seconds (2 wds.)
43 Five-cone caldera of Japan
44 Sachet pieces
45 Ph.D. exam
46 Leans toward
48 California fort
49 — pie
50 Response to a rodent
52 Mr. Chaney of film
53 Contributes (2 wds.)
57 Nightspots
61 Lyricist Lorenz —
62 Seeps out
64 Kansas town
65 "Oops!" (hyph.)
66 Golf or skiing
67 Short slant
68 Hires a crew
69 Wails
70 — Romeo

Down
1 Carried a tune
2 Park feature
3 Club, briefly
4 In a fight
5 To the third power
6 Aussie mineral
7 Set a price
8 Impolite look
9 Scatter about
10 His name may ring a bell
11 Opera tune
12 Standee's lack
13 Markdown
21 Antiquity, once
23 Oater classic
26 Facing the pitcher (2 wds.)
27 Moon position
28 Egret cousin
29 Bean or horse
30 Storybook elephant
31 Bring to a boil
33 On the lookout
34 Red Sea peninsula
35 Championship
37 Never, in Nuremberg
38 Mir successor
41 Basilica parts
42 Peak near ancient Troy (2 wds.)
47 Ocean bottoms
49 Romaine
51 Newsstand
52 Tallies
53 Sidekick
54 Tee-hee cousin (hyph.)
55 Taconite yield
56 Yep canceler
57 Capital near Zurich
58 Stir up
59 Canute's foe
60 Long story
63 Actress — Saldana

Yesterday's answer



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3 SPORTS

No Cano for Yanks?

Yankees will not pay Cano $300M

Yankees president Randy Levine told ESPN New York on Tuesday the team would love to have All-Star Robinson Cano back — but not for the $300 million his representatives have publicly discussed. "Until he gets a little more realistic, we have nothing to talk about," Levine said.

Watch online

Find video and recap of Tuesday night's Flyers-Senators game at: **Metro.us/sports.**

Turning it around

Evan Turner is taking on a leadership role on a team filled with young talent and recent draft picks. / GETTY IMAGES

NBA. Evan Turner was considered a bust by some, but he's having a breakout season under new coach Brett Brown.

Sixers head coach Brett Brown is a huge believer in player development.

For proof, look no further than Evan Turner.

The fourth-year guard and former No. 2 overall pick in 2010 is having a career season. It has only been 12 games, but Turner's improvement has been noticeable in every aspect of his game.

Turner has scored 264 points in the first 12 games for a career-high of 22.0 points per game.

His previous career-high? Try 13.3 points last season.

It's not just scoring.

Turner is driving to the basket and drawing fouls. He's rebounding, moving the ball and playing tenacious defense.

"I'm just comfortable," Turner said. "The coaches have put a lot of confidence in me and I'm playing with confidence. If I miss a few shots in a row, I'm going to keep shooting. They encourage me to keep shooting. My teammates have been phenomenal. Just a comfortable situation all the way around for me."

But the future remains unclear for Turner.

The Sixers have until June 30 to offer Turner an $8.7 million fifth-year qualifying offer or he will become an unrestricted free agent. If the Sixers do extend the qualifying offer, Turner will become a restricted free agent, giving Philadelphia the opportunity to match any offer he receives from another team.

But that's in the future.

For now, Turner is focused solely on helping the Sixers continue to silence the doubters.

"I'm locked in on what's going on with the Sixers on the court," Turner said. "The coaching staff has done an incredible job of keeping us focused on the immediate task at hand. As a veteran on this team, it's my job to lead by example on the court. I'm giving it everything I've got and the results have been good. People didn't expect much from us but as players, we don't care what people say.

"We have a tight locker room and our goals come from within. We're very competitive players and can play with anyone as we have shown with wins over Miami and Chicago."

The Sixers host Toronto Wednesday night after being swept at Atlanta, New Orleans and Dallas. They're still a surprising 5-7 and Turner is listed on the All-Star ballot.

All he cares about is winning.

"I'm not even thinking about that," Turner said of the All-Star ballot. "Would it be cool? Of course. My job is to be ready to go every single day for this team. That's where all my energy is being focused."

ANDY JASNER
sports@metro.us

Slumping Sixers

The Sixers have lost three straight games and are falling back to the record expected of them before their shocking 3-0 start.

- Brown is still happy with the team's effort, however. "I thought we battled and showed a lot of heart to come back from arguably our worst performance in New Orleans, and we lost to a good team," Brown told reporters after the game.

BRETT BROWN IS KEEPING THE TONE POSITIVE THIS SEASON. GETTY IMAGES

Looking ahead

Sixers return home with winnable games on schedule

Coming off a tough, winless, road trip, the Sixers have two very winnable games in a row at home.

The Sixers play the 4-7 Raptors, who are actually second in the disappointing Atlantic Division, Wednesday night. And then face the 2-7 Bucks, who are last in the Central, on Friday night.

The Sixers are currently 4-3 at the Wells Fargo Center this season. METRO

Rudy Gay is leading the Raptors with 20.6 points per game. / GETTY IMAGES

2014 comes into focus for Hamels

Quoted
"What I hope happens is that we're finally healthy next season. We had so many injuries and so many things go wrong last season. We need to stay healthy and perform up to our potential. I think we'll be tough."
Hamels
Cole Hamels went 8-14 with a 3.60 ERA in the 2013 season for the Phillies. / GETTY IMAGES

MLB. The Phillies hurler is looking forward to more W's next season.

"Focus" was a word bandied about quite a bit during Cole Hamels' baseball clinic for children last weekend in Boothwyn, Pa.

Charismatic motivational speaker Jim Brogan, Cincinnati Reds farmhand Mike Costanza and Hamels kept dropping the F-word — focus — when speaking about mental toughness to little leaguers at Maple Zone Sports and Fitness.

So, what is Hamels, who will turn 30 in December, focusing on after the Phillies disappointing 73-loss season in 2013?

"I've been watching a lot of football," Hamels said. "That's what I've been watching. It's that time of year."

The San Diego native, who resides year-round in Philadelphia, is rooting hard for his Chargers.

"I would love to see them catch up to the Denver Broncos but I don't think that's going to happen," said the lefty.

Hamels is taking a bit of a mental break from the Phillies while recovering from a lost season.

"I'm trying to recharge my batteries," Hamels said. "I've been thinking about other things."

When pressed about 2014, Hamels quickly detailed what needs to go right.

"What I hope happens is that we're finally healthy next season," Hamels said. "We had so many injuries and so many things go wrong last season. We need to stay healthy and perform up to our potential. I think we'll be tough."

Hamels refused to comment on general manager Ruben Amaro's recent signing of Marlon Byrd. But he did note that he's optimistic about next season.

"We have a lot of talent on this team," Hamels said. "I believe we can bounce back. I'll be ready when it comes time to go to Florida."

ED CONDRAN
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Triple-digit threat

100

The next game Hamels wins will be the 100th of his career. He likely would have accomplished the feat last season but received the worst run support in the National League.

Hamels. Making big difference in Malawi

Before pitchers and catchers report, Cole Hamels is focusing on his foundation and project Malawi. Malawi, an oft-overlooked nation, is an AIDS-ravaged African country. It's been estimated that more than 1 million children have been orphaned by AIDS in Malawi.

"We're trying to make a difference in Malawi," Hamels said. "They need our help."

Hamels, along with his wife Heidi, will open a school in September 2014 in the deprived land.

"It's something that we can't wait for," she said.

Could a baseball academy follow the conventional school the Hamels Foundation is constructing in Malawi?

"We brought whiffle balls and bats down to Malawi and before explaining the rules the kids came up with some pretty inventive games with balls and bats down there," Heidi Hamels added. "We're still introducing the game to them."

But can the Phillies starting pitcher foresee tapping into a new world of talent and capitalizing on it as an agent or as a scout in his post-major league career?

"That's an interesting idea," Hamels said while laughing. "But I hope that I have plenty of years left pitching for the Phillies. I'm not ready to think about what I'll do when I'm done pitching."

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NBA power rankings | by James Toscano

No. 1

Pacers (9-1)

A double-digit loss to the Bulls last weekend wasn't pretty, but it's really the only blemish through 10 games for Indiana. Obviously they weren't going to stay undefeated forever, and getting beaten in a regional rivalry is far from a bad loss. There's no reason why they can't take their next three games as well. They play at the banged-up Knicks, at the young Celtics and host the possibly tanking 76ers. The depth on this roster makes us question just how big of a favorite the Heat should be in the Eastern Conference after all.

No. 2

Spurs (9-1)

Their only loss so far is to the Blazers. Once again, the Spurs will be a top contender in the NBA.

No. 3

Thunder (7-3)

The Thunder's loss to the Warriors at the buzzer last week might be the game of the year to this point.

No. 4

Heat (7-3)

Miami has three straight victories since their surprising buzzer-beater loss to Boston.

No. 5

Clippers (7-4)

Before Monday's loss, L.A. won four straight over the Rockets, T-Wolves, Thunder and Nets.

No. 6

Warriors (8-3)

Klay Thompson is shooting over 50 percent from 3-point range.

No. 7

Blazers (9-2)

Your surprise team of the season so far. The Blazers have ripped off seven wins in a row.

No. 8

Rockets (7-4)

We have our first trade demand of the season, and it's from Houston's Omer Asik.

No. 9

Bulls (6-3)

Derrick Rose is averaging 15 points and 4.5 assists per game so far. Maybe he's not fully healthy yet.

No. 10

T-Wolves (7-4)

The T-Wolves have five games from Tuesday to Monday, including facing the Clippers and Pacers.

No. 11

Grizzlies (6-5)

The Griz are grindin' and back over .500. But they face a tough stretch.

No. 12

Hawks (6-4)

Paul Millsap sat out Tuesday's game against the Heat with right elbow tendinitis.

No. 13

Mavs (7-4)

The Monta Ellis signing is working out in Dallas, as the shooting guard is averaging 22.1 points.

No. 14

Nuggets (4-6)

Denver let one get away in OKC on Monday. Going 25-43 from the free-throw line will do that.

No. 15

Nets (3-7)

Just picture Celtics GM Danny Ainge smiling like The Grinch in his office as the Nets continue to lose.

No. 16

Cavaliers (4-7)

Dion Waiters has missed two games with "flu-like symptoms." Hmmm.

No. 17

Pelicans (4-6)

Anthony Davis (20.9 ppg) is already well on his way to being a star in this league.

No. 18

Pistons (3-6)

Three wins over the Wizards, Celtics and Kings aren't anything to brag about.

No. 19

Knicks (3-6)

The Knicks are in full, "Yeah, propose that trade — can't hurt" mode.

No. 20

Bobcats (5-6)

OK, we'll give the Bobcats some respect. They don't look completely hapless out there.

No. 21

Wizards (2-7)

Nene ruffled a few feathers when he called out his younger teammates.

No. 22

Suns (5-4)

The Suns didn't get the memo that every team is beating the Nets right now.

No. 23

Lakers (5-7)

The Lakers are floating around .500 while waiting for the return of Kobe, which could be soon.

No. 24

Raptors (4-7)

Rudy Gay is averaging 20.6 points on 20 shots per game. Not exactly what you'd call efficient.

No. 25

Celtics (4-7)

The Celtics are up and down, but we're realizing they probably do stink after all.

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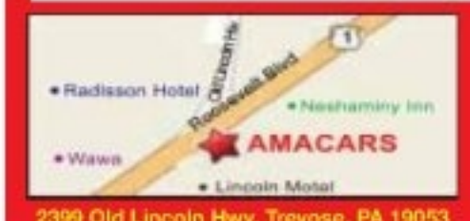

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A long row to hoe for Birds after bye

NFL. December will be no picnic for the playoff-hopeful Eagles.

It'll be a long December for the Eagles but there's already little doubt that this one will be better, or at least more entertaining, than the last.

Philly began the last month of its 2012 season with just three wins and won just one of its five games the rest of the way (a 23-21 victory at Tampa Bay). With a bye this weekend, the Eagles will next play on Dec. 1 at home against the Cardinals. After that, there's another one at the Linc on Dec. 8 against Detroit, a trip to Minnesota to face the lowly Vikings, a final regular season home game against Chicago and the regular season finale on Dec. 29 at Dallas.

On the surface, it looks like a daunting road for the Eagles as four of the five teams they play the rest of the way are firmly in the playoff mix. This may be indicative of just how much parity there is in the NFC, but the combined records of the teams they play the rest of the way is an even 25-25.

Quoted

"Nick (Foles) will be the starter for the bye week."

A joking Chip Kelly
On the Eagles QB situation

Brandon Boykin and the Eagles will close out their 2013 regular season against the Cowboys. / HUNTER MARTIN, GETTY IMAGES

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Brady, Manning set for one more classic matchup

NFL. Tom Brady and Peyton Manning will renew their epic rivalry Sunday.

NBC has been hyping Brady-Manning XIV since Labor Day, and rightfully so.

Tom Brady and Peyton Manning are the premier quarterbacks of this generation, have been dueling since 2001 and, unfortunately for fans, are running out of time. Football mortality is creeping in for both future Hall-of-Famers. It's another sub-plot for just how special this 14th meeting with be between the two Sunday in Foxboro (8:30 p.m., NBC).

Tom Brady. / GETTY IMAGES

By the numbers

0.8

Brady is averaging 0.8 interceptions in the last five head-to-head matchups vs. Peyton Manning.

In their last five meetings, dating back to the Patriots crushing loss to Manning's Colts in the 2006 AFC Championship Game, Brady has the overall edge with a 3-2 record. Manning and the Colts took advantage of the Brady-less Patriots in 2008, beating Matt Cassel and Co., 18-15. Interestingly enough, Manning had his most efficient game against the Patriots since 2007 when Brady was injured as he posted a 121.9 QB rating with 254 yards, two touchdowns and zero interceptions in the Nov. 2, 2008 game.

In the past five meetings, the two have similar numbers. Brady has a 102.6 QB Rating while averaging 254 yards passing with 2.0 TD passes and 0.8 INTs. Manning is averaging a 94.2 QB Rating with 326 yards passing, 2.6 TDs and 1.4 INTs.

Brady is 9-4 overall in his career against Manning.

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MLB free agency

Grady Sizemore. / GETTY IMAGES

Report: Phils eye Sizemore

The Phillies' 2014 roster is shaping into form.

A day after re-signing catcher Carlos Ruiz to a reported three-year, $26 million deal, there were whispers that Ruben Amaro was looking at inking former All-Star outfielder Grady Sizemore, according to FOX Sports' Ken Rosenthal.

Signing Sizemore would come with obvious risks considering he hasn't played a major league game in the past two seasons due to numerous surgeries. But due to his injury-riddled past, Sizemore would also command little money and would offer the Phils a classic low-risk, high-reward scenario.

Sizemore made his name in MLB with the Indians and was a three-time All-Star with the Tribe.

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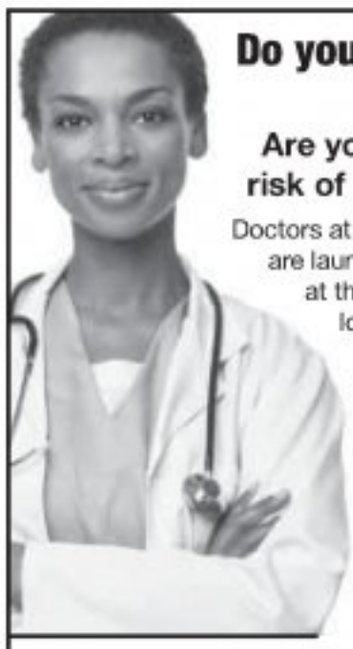

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